

# THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY IN CHESHIRE A CRITICAL SURVEY OF CHURCHES' PLACES OF WORSHIP 1990 TO 2015

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THE STATE OF CHRISTIANITY IN CHESHIRE  
A CRITICAL SURVEY OF CHURCHES' PLACES OF WORSHIP  
1990 TO 2015

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of the investigation was to ascertain whether the number of churches in Cheshire being closed is exceeding the number of new churches being opened - indicating continuing secularisation, or conversely, whether in fact openings are exceeding closures - indicating areas of stability or minor resurgence; and also to question what proportion of churches in Cheshire which *own* their place of worship, have extended or modernized their building - demonstrating *confidence* in future growth.

To answer these questions, a survey of every Christian church, active between 1990 and 2015, within the four unitary boroughs of Cheshire (Warrington, Cheshire East, Cheshire West & Chester, and Halton), was carried out by personal visit, or website exploration in the cases of churches which hired public buildings for worship. Every gain and loss of an active church over the 25 year time frame was recorded in order to reveal the *reality* of the situation overall and the trends which have occurred.

The research results revealed that 22 of the 105 so-called *closures* were actually strategic replacement or *relocation* decisions (inferring growth not decline) which casts doubt on the validity of national closure statistics and on the conclusions of commentators who have (historically) been misled by ambiguous statistics.

Of 118 new, mostly Pentecostal churches, 60 (51%) were hidden in hired public buildings such as schools, giving an erroneous impression of fewer churches. A second economic trend was evident from the 25 Local Ecumenical Partnerships found, which had enabled various denominational combinations to share buildings.

As well as an increase in all indicators of growth and social reconnection, there was a marginal *net gain* over 25 years of 13 new churches (Halton -4, CHE +2, CW&C -1, Warrington +16) - a modest, but positive outcome, which indicated stability overall.

## DECLARATION

'This work is original and has not been submitted previously in support of any qualification or course'.

Signed: M. R. Rainbow

Date 22 August 2017

## WORD COUNT

Approximately 20,000

(excluding the Bibliography and Appendices)

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## ABBREVIATIONS - Denominational

Adv = Adventist *	AOG = Assemblies of God Pentecostal
B = Baptist (and Independent Baptist)	Br = Brethren (incl. Plymouth Brethren)
CE = Church of England	Chr = Christadelphian *
CF = Christian Fellowship	CSc = Christian Science *
Elim = Elim Pentecostal	GkO = Greek Orthodox (Antiochian, Lutheran)
Ind = Independent	IM = Independent Methodist
JCLDS = Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints *	JW = Jehovah's Witnesses *
LEL = Latvian Evangelical Lutheran	LWI = Living Waters International (P)
M = Methodist (& Wesleyan Methodist)	Nd = Non-denominational
Nf = New Frontiers (P) charismatic evangelical	NTCG = New Testament Church of God (P)
P = Pentecostal	PM = Primitive Methodist
Pr = Presbyterian (& Pr Church of Wales)	Q = Quaker (Society of Friends)
RCCG = Redeemed Christian Church of God (P)	RC = Roman Catholic
SA = Salvation Army	U = Unitarian *
V = Vineyard (charismatic evangelical)	URC = United Reformed Church
WEGM = World Evangelical Gospel Mission (P)	WC = Welsh Calvinist

## ABBREVIATIONS - General

ACF = Asian Christian Fellowship	CAP = Christians Against Poverty
CC = Community Church	Cc = Christian centre
cc = community centre	CHE = Cheshire East Council
CW&C = Cheshire West and Chester	CT = Churches Together
E = Extended (building)	Ev = Evangelical
H = Halton Council (Runcorn + Widnes)	LEP = Local Ecumenical Partnership
M = Modernized (building)	N = New (church building)
Nh = New hire (for worship)	NH = New Hope / NL = New Life
OFNC = Overseas Federation of Nigerian Christians	NWBA = North Western Baptist Association
SNU = Spiritualists National Union	SVPS = Saint Vincent de Paul Society
W = Warrington Borough Council	YFC = Youth for Christ
* = Non-Trinitarian.	

## SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The inspiration for the study came from the apparent *contradiction* between falling church attendance statistics nationally, and the situation in Cheshire, where it was not uncommon to see new church buildings being built, or Baptist and Pentecostal Church services being attended by 100 to 250 people. Not only were there serious differences between reported conditions and observable realities, there were also inadequacies in the compilation and interpretation of statistics. So this project was conceived as an attempt to reveal, in accurate numerical terms, what has *actually* been happening to Christianity in Cheshire (which might be symptomatic of trends within other counties too) over a particular period of time.

During the mid-1990's Bruce (1995), Davie (1994), and others, advanced various social change versions of secularisation theory, to explain the rapid decline evident in church attendance statistics (mostly compiled by Peter Brierley), from 1951 to 1990, which demonstrated a continuing (but diminishing) downward trend (Bruce 1995, 40). Subsequently, however, analytical evidence emerged which questioned the credibility of the conclusions drawn from the statistics, in several key areas.

First, to acquire church attendance data, Brierley used the *postal questionnaire* method to conduct his English Church Censuses to which he received a response rate of 70% in 1989; 33% in 1998; and 50% in 2005 (Brierley 2006, xx). His data (and that of commentators who used it) was therefore, seriously incomplete. Even Woodhead reproduced his ostensibly *reliable* data without qualifying Brierley's own acknowledgement (Brierley 2006, xx) of its limitations (Woodhead and Catto 2012, 5).

Second, as Hamilton (2001), and Fox (2005). pointed out, accurate recording of

church attendances is subject to variability in terms of 'which' attendances are included, so the achievement of comparability and consistency is problematic. Similarly, lacking local knowledge, reported *negative* church (building) closure statistics fail to reveal how many of the congregations relocated to new or more modern premises, or merged with another church - as in 20 cases known to the writer in Warrington, a phenomenon which seemed at odds with the statistics.

Third, a 'lack of rigour' in treatment of sources and data upon which the conclusions of proponents were based, prompted Hanson (1977, 164) to assert that through the act of *repetition* the unreliable statistics upon which the notion of secularisation had been sustained, had acquired a misleading 'artificial' authenticity over time.

Fourth, since both Brierley's (2005) Census data, and a review by Riesebrodt and Konieczny (2005), indicated that the 'rate of decline' in attendances and implied loss of significance of religion in society had slowed, these trends have been impacted by the 2007-8 global financial crisis and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism. So religion seems to have regained some of its lost social status as pockets of resurgence have sprung up, and church/charity food banks have fed 1 m+ people annually since 2014.

To overcome the above evaluative deficiencies, a need was seen for a more reliable review of the institutional and social state of Christianity, based on forms of evidence other than attendances, which could reliably represent the *confidence* of churches in their future, despite financial burdens. So this investigation will gather primary data on the outcome of Cheshire churches' adaptive responses to change over a 25 year period, as Christianity sought to reinvent itself in an ever-changing society. And, from the emergent critical evidence, answer the compelling research question:

'Is the number of churches in Cheshire being closed, exceeding that of new churches opening - indicating advancing secularism, or is the number of new churches opening, exceeding closures - indicating areas of stability or minor resurgence? Also, how many of the churches which own their premises have extended or modernized - demonstrating *confidence* in their future growth?'

Structurally, Section 1 develops the notion of adaptive responses to change as an indicator of changes in believers' collective involvement in public worship. The investigation parameters are outlined in the purpose and objectives, scope and scale of the project, predicted constraints; and the conceptual framework, which is related to relevant recent social, economic and religious issues. The research proposals and survey design are grounded in the Section 2 brief overview of current secularism. Section 3 describes the research procedure and methods used to achieve accuracy during the primary data collection, in order to classify, consistently, the range of situations found and the mobility of churches. The Section 4 conclusions are drawn from the findings, and from factors which appear to be responsible for the revealed trends. Lastly, how the results overall relate to national surveys and broader issues, and also why the results might withstand challenge, is discussed.

#### PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the research was to determine to what extent the varying number of churches that have been closed over 25 years, have been matched by new churches opening. Also, to reveal to what extent active church buildings have been extended or modernized (or public buildings 'hired' for worship), in order to ascertain whether the findings would indicate (indirectly), a growth or decline trend in public worship in



Cheshire. To achieve this purpose, the objectives were to:

1. Compile a comprehensive register of churches still active in Cheshire in 2015 (Appendix A) from which a 1990 version could be calculated by subtracting the gains over 25 years (Appendix B) and adding back the closures (Appendix C) revealed by the survey, which together constitute the database for analysis.

2. Visit every active church building and investigate all church websites, especially those which hire public buildings for worship, to ascertain their current situation.

3. Research as appropriate, the year of closure, opening, extending, or modernizing of church buildings, or hiring of other venues for public worship.

4. Record the findings so as to facilitate analysis by unitary authority area, location, denomination, and critically, the year the event occurred, in order to produce a year by year profile of the incidence of the indicators of change.

5. Interpret and evaluate the results for each unitary authority area, relative to each other, to findings elsewhere (where comparable), by Brierley (2006) for example, and to relevant social or religious issues.

6. Undertake a literature review of secularisation, especially of the shortcomings in conventional assessments which imply negative trends in religious observance, and in the social significance of religious institutions in society relative to recent economic, religious, and political crises.

7. Continually question whether the evidence gathered is necessary or sufficient to achieve the purpose of the study (the what, when, where, and why?). And also note the presence of any new immigrant Christian communities such as Greek, Latvian, Nigerian, Polish, or Zimbabwean ministries which may be augmenting the resilience of Christianity to secularism in Cheshire.

## SCOPE AND CONSTRAINTS

The catchment area of the survey was the *Ceremonial* County of Cheshire, which, since the local government restructuring on 1 April 2009, consists of four unitary boroughs: Halton, Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, and Warrington. Halton (comprising Widnes and Runcorn), and Warrington (which includes Croft, Culcheth and Lymm) became unitary authorities on 1 April 1998, but remain part of Cheshire for ceremonial purposes, fire and policing. The Ceremonial County of Cheshire covers an area of 905 square miles (2,343 square km), and an estimated population in 2011, of 1,028,600 ([cheshireeast.gov.uk](http://cheshireeast.gov.uk); [cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](http://cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk); [halton.gov.uk](http://halton.gov.uk); [warrington.gov.uk](http://warrington.gov.uk); May 2014).

Cheshire West and Chester Council, covers an area formerly administered by the City of Chester, and the boroughs of Ellesmere Port and Neston, and Vale Royal; which includes Frodsham, Helsby, Malpas, Northwich, and Winsford.

Cheshire East Council, covers the area formerly part of the Congleton, Crewe & Nantwich, and Macclesfield boroughs, which includes Alderley Edge, Alsager, Bollington, Knutsford, Middlewich, Poynton, Prestbury, Sandbach, and Wilmslow.

Although historically, Cheshire also contained the Wirral, Altrincham, Cheadle, Dukinfield, Hale, Hyde, Marple, Romiley, Sale, Stalybridge, Stockport, and Tintwistle, from 1 April 1974 when the Local Government Act 1972 took effect, administration of these areas transferred to metropolitan counties ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May 2014](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/May_2014)).

By focussing on premises used for worship, including public buildings hired for worship, as an alternative indicator of change in public worship and community

development activity attendance, the survey was designed to demonstrate the actual profile of change from 1990 to 2015, to establish the reality of what is happening to active churches in Cheshire. The 1990 starting point meant that the profile of change overlaps the period from within which the statistics used by recent commentators on secularisation to formulate their conclusions was taken. It was also intended to make comparison of revealed trends with national statistics more convenient.

For purposes of the study, an 'active church' was defined as, 'A group of people who meet in the same premises primarily for the purpose of public worship' (Haralambos 2000, 471). Brierley's (2006, 15) definition specified 'Sunday' attendance, at least monthly. Both broadly follow the original New Testament concept of *ekklesia*, which as Hughes (1998, 72) pointed out, meant 'assembly' or 'congregation,' so 'church' referred to *people*, rather more than to buildings or hierarchical structures.

Given that both old and new churches *relocate* from time to time for various reasons while still active, I defined a truly 'closed church' as, 'A completely disbanded church, the former members of which no longer met (or meet) anywhere for worship.' Even so, 'closed church buildings' were, necessarily, a critical focus of the study.

The constraint which challenged the accuracy of the survey results most, was the challenge of finding information on closed church buildings, especially the year of closure, and name of those closed or disbanded farthest back in the time frame.

Another challenge due to the number of churches surveyed (over 900) and the distances involved (35 miles north to south, and 50 miles east to west), was to ensure that data collected during the early part of the survey was monitored and

updated regularly, as some churches changed their name, or location, or closed. Two churches relocated and changed their names three times in the time frame.

#### JUSTIFICATION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Church buildings are expensive to build, extend, or update, as well as operate. Thus there is constant financial pressure on faith communities to use resources efficiently and effectively in order to continue a particular mission. Even so, there are reasons beyond their control, why church buildings are closed, other than (or as well as) declining attendances. Therefore, the so-called closures may not necessarily mean *declining* religious belief or practice, as media commentators, or proponents of secularism suggest. Indeed, this investigation was inspired by decades of seeing neighbouring Baptist and Pentecostal congregations growing, and new immigrant faith communities springing up. So it seemed that a more realistic understanding of *actual* trends might be forthcoming from using an alternative means of evaluation such as indirect *indicators of change*, over a chosen time frame.

Common reasons for closing religious buildings other than unsustainably low attendances (which inevitably, means insufficient income) are that:

- (a) Occasionally, places of worship become isolated if surrounding areas are redeveloped for industrial or commercial use, as in the case of Christ Church, Runcorn, and St Ann, Warrington. Similarly, if the land on which a church building stands is required for infrastructure, it may be compulsorily purchased.
- (b) Town centre church buildings set among residential properties subsequently converted to offices or shops, may relocate nearer to where their members live.
- (c) Old church buildings may become very costly to restore when infested by dry

rot, or death watch beetles, as in the case of (saved) historic St Oswald, Winwick.

(d) Medieval design deficiencies such as a lack of toilet and kitchen facilities, or disabled access (and *fixed* seating), may limit the use of such buildings unless expensive modernization is carried out to modern building regulation standards.

Unsafe wiring closed both St. Faith CE Preston Brook, and St Anselm RC Dallam.

(e) New churches may need to move to larger premises to cope with sustained growth, as in the case of LifeChurch, Warrington - founder of 3 churches in 5 years.

(g) Church or other faith involvement in community projects such as drug or alcohol abuse rehabilitation, or the education of excluded pupils, may require multi-use, or purpose built premises.

(h) Economic or staff shortage pressures on denominations with two or more buildings in relatively close proximity may force a restructure into fewer existing buildings or one new replacement; as occurred in 2015, when eight Widnes Catholic churches were merged into four. However, although the *buildings* are closed in such cases, the 'church' survives through its merger with another church in the sense that neither the members nor their attendances are lost. Indeed in many cases, the influx of new members may support the survival of the host church.

The usual outcome of so-called 'closures' for most of the foregoing reasons, is therefore, not necessarily a reduction of the number of practicing believers, but rather, a more efficient concentration of places of worship available.

Reference to premises used for worship as an indirect indicator of attendance at services, was made on the premise that when related to the incidence of 'closures' within a particular area, a new church presence, or extensions to existing places

of worship, represent a reliable indicator of the evolving pattern of ways of doing church. Similarly, *new hired* venues can be seen as indicators of 'planting,' or the presence of a new faith community (indicating confidence in a particular area's need for a new church). Furthermore, decisions to extend, or to modernize (especially to replace fixed seating), indicate the 'confidence' of churches to invest capital, usually driven by new visions for the future.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of religion in 21st century society has become progressively more prominent over a range of controversial social and religious issues, especially in emotive debates about abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering, ethics, faith school admissions, same sex marriage and adoption, food poverty, and war - on which various religious institutions have from time to time, challenged the UK state position. As a result, the view of religious representatives on these concerns, as well as on the threat posed by radicalized Islamic fundamentalists, and child sex abuse within the church, is currently sought by the media to the extent that news casts *daily* include items about religion. It is not unusual for two or more current religious items to be aired in a ten-minute bulletin. For instance, the 15 May 2014 BBC Radio 4 8.00 am. news, included the 100 Chibok schoolgirl kidnapping in Nigeria by Islamic extremists; the trial of the radical Muslim cleric, Abu Hamza; a research study in the USA which found that many hispanic Christians have deserted their Catholic background for Pentecostalism; and supermarket policies concerning slaughtering procedures and labelling of *kosher* and *halal* (lawful) lamb. These interesting developments appear to support an assertion by Beckford (2003, 60) that the relevance of religious values to

politics and public morality is gradually being reasserted at a time when secular values seem to be fostering conflict.

Alongside these issues has been the reaction of churches to the wake up call of falling attendances (in some but not all denominations) and to growing secularism reported during the late 20th Century. These trends were of serious concern to Christians, and possibly other faiths too, which may explain instances of generous support for new ecumenical conceptions of outreach such as the 'On The Move' barbecue missions, 'Alpha' courses, Full Gospel Businessmen, Street Pastors, and 'Fresh Expressions' of doing church such as Cafe' Church, and Messy Church.

Escalating financial pressures have imposed on churches, a need to find, and institute ways of reducing the running costs of their premises, as charitable trust building project funding applications exceed the availability of funds. One such solution to these pressures is evident in varying combinations of what Tomkins (1986, 221) called *convergence*. In this investigation, convergence appears as local 'ecumenical partnerships' (LEP's), or *hiring arrangements*, which formalize shared use of premises by two or more denominations, or by churches with schools, or by churches with community groups.

The central focus of the literature review which follows, is on those aspects of secularisation which are both pertinent and can contribute to the formation of a conceptual framework for the fieldwork. Consequently, it tends towards recent indicators of religious commitment, and towards changes in the significance of religious institutions in society - critically, trends in the evolving role of churches.

## SECTION 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### ASPECTS OF SECULARISATION AND SECULARISM

Secularisation is 'the transfer of something from a religious to a non-religious use, or from control by a religious body to control by the state or person; .. to remove the religious dimension from something or otherwise make it secular' (Rooney 1999, 123). Secularism is 'the belief that religion should not be involved with the ordinary social and political activities of a country' (dictionary.cambridge.org).

According to Fox (2005, 292), since 'secularisation takes place in the 'public' arena, it is not synonymous with 'secularism' which is held by some to also have 'a more personal ['private'] orientation' - a subtle distinction not obvious in some definitions.

The above relatively recent definitions contrast with the earlier versions proposed by Wilson (1966, 14), who understood secularisation as 'the process whereby religious thinking, practice, and institutions lose social significance' and Berger (1969, 107-8), who saw it in terms of institutional influence, belief and ethos, but in more recent works, 'rejected the notion of secularisation' (Fox 2005, 304). Later, Northcott (1999, 214), more comprehensively included declines in: 'participation in religious activities;' 'membership of faith traditions;' the 'influence of religious institutions in society;' and the 'authority of and belief in religious teachings,' as signs of transformation. Bruce (2002, 3), eventually referred to it as a, 'social condition manifest as declines in:

(a) the importance of religion for the operation of non-religious roles and institutions such as those of the state and economy; (b) the social status of religious roles and institutions; and (c) the extent to which people engage in religious practices, accept religious beliefs, and live lives guided by those beliefs.



In a subsequent review, Bruce (2003, 258), suggested that, 'social and structural differentiation, societalization, rationalization, and increasing social and cultural diversity, undermine religion' except, that is, where religion retains roles, 'other than relating individuals to God,' of which he acknowledged, there are many examples. A key case of a retained function into which secular society is regularly drawn, is the traditional role of organizing funeral or memorial services after tragedies such as the Manchester bombing ,and the London Bridge terrorist attack, which are (ever more frequent) expressions of the continuing, reliance of society upon what Davie (2007, 12) called, 'vicarious religion' (though her "active minority" has grown somewhat).

The prevalent widespread diversity in meanings and usage of terms used to define secularisation has resulted in considerable misunderstanding, not least because interpretation is dependent on what is meant by "religion" which is itself 'notoriously difficult to define' (Fox 2005, 297). In fact some recent definitions are extraordinarily broad. Rooney (1999, 123), for example, defined religion as '1. people's beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature and worship of God, a god or gods, and divine involvement in the universe and human life; 2. a particular institutionalized or personal set of beliefs and practices relating to the divine.' Consequently, noting a 'tendency towards ideological bias' of supporters and opponents of secularisation, Hamilton (2001, 186-7) deduced that, 'It is probably true that those who support the secularisation thesis are not themselves much attracted by religion while those who oppose it, are more religiously orientated.' For Beckford (2003, 41) too, the modern notion of secularisation never had any unitary meaning, nor had it been the focus of any rigorous study of religious change.

Further misunderstanding can arise when, as Haralambos (2000, 470) observed, different writers perceive the primary function of religion differently. For example, as 'worship' in dedicated buildings (in which case a decline in church attendance could be seen as a sign of a loss of religious influence); as 'religious belief' (which may not involve attendance at a church service); as the role faith plays in 'shaping public life and institutions;' or as the influence religious conviction has on the 'socialization of individuals and moral values in society.'

For Hamilton (2001, 187), this perceived disparity has made finding a reliable means of measuring 'the extent to which religion has lost, or is losing its social significance' problematic, as has defining 'religion' upon which 'what to measure' depends. In addition to the 'talking at cross-purposes' outcome of supporters and opponents' use of different conceptions or terms, Beckford (2003, 68) and Hanson (1997, 164), also drew attention to the 'lack of rigour' in comparing historical and contemporary data, through a '*failure to investigate*' the sources of historical data which proponents had relied upon to support their case.

'Both Stark and Iannaccone (1994), and Bruce (1995, 1996), use their purported statistical proofs and historical data to speak of the 'why.' They then use this rationale as proof that religion has indeed lost its significance or has not done so. Thus a cyclical, self-supporting argument is set up on weak proofs and propositions, gaining artificial credibility by mere repetition' (Hanson 1997, 164).

This emphatic criticism illustrates how historical indicators of secularisation could have been exaggerated; and how important the selection of reliable indicators, and scrutiny of primary data sources will be to (procedurally) maintain the integrity of this study (albeit that over the past decade, secularisation has been sidelined by more

pressing concerns about terrorism and the impact of mass population movement). From 1990 to 2005 (the first 15 years of the survey time frame) institutional church closures and attendances were still in decline according to Brierley (2006, 18, 26), though the 'rate of decline' was *diminishing* (ibid, 11, 19, 28). At the same time, the number and 'rate of growth' of new churches was *increasing*, and attendances at new ethnic minority churches, growing (ibid, 11, 22, 31). These trends suggest the possibility of a slowing down of the shrinkage of Christianity, despite the statistics being based on an incomplete dataset due to compilation omissions. For example, attendances at churches which worship during the week were not included, and of the churches that were contacted in 2005, only 50 percent responded (ibid, xx, 15).

Long term statistical trends imply consistent data compilation over time, but changes in church circumstances, who is included, and an increasing range of denominations, have made continuity and accurate comparison problematic. Many people who attend church services today are not 'members' as such (each institution has a different concept of what constitutes membership), have little denominational allegiance, and regularly drift between churches. Some counts may not include young children, or attendance at midweek meetings (e.g. at Messy Church, Alpha courses, Full Gospel Businessmen), which are increasing in number and popularity according to Brierley (2006, 256). This growth combined with that of new non-denominational, ethnic, and Pentecostal churches, means that attendances are almost certainly higher than the 2005 Church Census totals indicate.

Not surprisingly then, the 2001 Census revealed that 40.3 million (77.5 per cent) of the respondents - which included 37.3 million (71.7 per cent) 'nominal' Christians –

'claimed' to have a religious affiliation in one way or other (Summerfield and Babb 2004, 209). The residual significant gap between attendance statistics and implied belief of non-churchgoers, emphasized the unreliability of these figures as accurate measures of trends in religious belief or practice, or indeed as valid evidence of the status of Christianity at the time. Hence, the alternative *indirect* indicators proposed for this study survey (changes in churches' places of worship) may help clarify what trends are actually occurring (albeit not quantitative in terms of attendances).

Sociologist Grace Davie (1994) interpreted the statistical gap between attendances at church services and census-inferred belief, as an indication of a trend away from organized public worship towards more private 'believing without belonging' ways of expressing religious belief. Although this trend embodied a wide range of personal religiosities and forms of expression, it seemed at odds with Durkheim's view that religion is 'eminently social' (Hamilton 2001, 111). Indeed, according to Riesebrodt & Konieczny (2005, 134), even religious sects function through trust within a social group. For Christians, private worship means missing out on an important element - the unifying experience of sharing the Eucharist - 'the place where the personal, the social, the immanent, and the transcendent converge' (Rose 2009, 115). Even so, believing without belonging was reported by Nazir-Ali (2001, 23) as being due to the discovery (at the time) of a 'widespread reluctance to belong to any organization that demands active participation.' However, in such cases, Gill (1993), cited by Nazir-Ali (2001, 23), observed that, 'while belief persists, it also mutates so that it becomes more selective and syncretistic.' Yet for Brierley (2006, 6), 'People may lead more secular lives, but they retain sacred hearts.'

The statistical gap could be explained more fully if there was something other than a large number of people 'claiming' to have a religious conviction, between the unseen private nature of Davie's 'believing without belonging' proposition on the one hand, and the eminently 'social nature' of organized public worship on the other. Despite, that is, the fact that between 2001 and 2011, the gap was reduced by the number of "nominal" Christians falling by 12.4 per cent to 33.2 million (59.3 per cent), possibly due to the more honest answers ([www.ons.gov.uk/2011](http://www.ons.gov.uk/2011)). Hopefully, the proposed empirical investigation will shed some light on this intriguing possibility.

This leads to the question of *choice* in which there exists an element of competition between providers of religious services. It could be argued that within Christianity in the UK, a fair range of choice has been available for some time through the various denominations, such that most people should be able to find a form of worship which suits their individual preference. While this diversity could be interpreted as lacking unity, over the past two decades, the influx of international ministries such as Living Waters, New Frontiers, Assemblies of God, Redeemed Christian Church of God, and Vineyard, has not only widened the choice, but also as Nazir-Ali (2001, 170) pointed out, encouraged unity through their willingness to work together. This expansion of evangelical and charismatic churches, along with an increase in 'churches together' groups, may 'mean the salvation of Christianity itself' (Anderson 2005, 605).

Another economic issue in terms of supply and demand, of relevance to the places of worship focus of this study, was the recasting by Robin Gill (2003, 7), of his 1993 proposition, that the extent of churchgoing decline has been exaggerated by 19th Century Victorian 'over provision' and his insistence that 'empty free church chapels

*preceded* the decline in churchgoing.' So the eventual demolition or conversion of church buildings to secular uses in both urban and rural areas does not necessarily constitute evidence of secularisation so much as historical 'inept planning.' For Gill, secularisation was never a satisfactory explanation for declines in churchgoing. In many towns, church and chapel closures were simply an inevitable consequence of the demise of local industries, which forced hundreds of workers to move away to seek work elsewhere, leaving behind 'over provision' for a shrinking population. For the large denominations, inner city over provision led to rationalization which in turn resulted in churches being declared redundant. Nationally, there were 9 per cent fewer closures from 1998 to 2005, than from 1989 to 1998 (Brierley 2006, 11, 80).

Despite the intransigent view of Partridge (2004, 3), who, though he accepted that some writers might want to qualify specific aspects of secularisation, insisted that its basic premises regarding the decline of Christianity in Europe, '*cannot seriously be questioned*.' However, concomitantly, other writers were already questioning the assumed inevitability of secularisation in the light of radical new changes worldwide. Riesebrodt and Konieczny (2005, 125) in particular, observed that sociologists who thought society would become increasingly secular, had been surprised by, 'The dramatic resurgence of religion' which had taken place 'over the last two decades in which religion had 're-emerged as a relatively autonomous public force.' This new 'empirical reality of religious resurgence' had made it necessary to revise existing understandings of secularisation, 'in ways which [did] not entail its inevitability and irreversibility' but rather, conceptualize it 'as an historical *process* to be located and explored' (Riesebrodt and Konieczny 2005, 135). In a later review, Woodhead and

Catto (2012, 8) referred to the reversal process phenomenon, as 'desecularisation.'

Today, Grace Davie acknowledges this 'resurgence' through citing in her profile, 'How are we to make sense of the growing significance of religion in the modern world?' as a primary research interest along with religion and 'welfare' and religion and 'health care' (social.sciences.exeter.ac.uk-2016). Both the latter interests are becoming the basis of innovative churches' commitment to their local community.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN LOCAL CHURCH – COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

As new ways of doing church have evolved to enable churches to engage with people in the contextual reality of their daily lives, so too have traditional definitions of 'what church is' had to be re-conceptualized.

It follows that although the Haralambos (2000, 471) definition of church mentioned earlier was sufficient for the purpose of the survey, to remain relevant in a secular age, broader perspectives to expand visions and change attitudes and values are necessary for churches intent on making a real difference in their local community. For Montefiore (1993, 256), this is essential Christian behaviour to achieve social justice. To this end, Warren (2004, 3) presented church as 'a whole organization or 'system' with its own discernible ethos, identity, and spirit' of discovery. This means that 'church' is not just a 'Building + Priest + Sunday Services' ('the inherited mode'), but that 'church = a community + faith + action' ('the emerging mode') (Warren 2004, 84-5, 89). Yet there is no competition between these modes, each still has its place. So being proactive in faith communities in the form of providing *care* which strives to mitigate the effects of modern social ills is key to continuing the resurgent *relevance* of churches to their communities - as demonstrated by the 'food bank' phenomenon.

Indeed, the *perception* of non-churchgoers from a study in Coventry, that modern social ills such as 'greed, materialism, ignorance' and 'lack of community spirit' were mainly responsible for 'domestic social problems,' was seen by Spencer (2005, 183) as, 'an enormous opportunity for churches to act as a counter-cultural community.'

Moreover, as church growth strategist David Beer (2004, 26) noted, unless churches do engage their communities in mission, their survival may be at risk. Therefore they need 'a 'new confidence' in taking the good news out into the world around them, because, 'the church exists for those who are not yet in it' (Beer 2004, 17). In fact Brierley (2006, 255) found that, 'Confidence in the church, in each other, and in the gospel itself, returns when the church is growing.

In planning new initiatives, the emphasis, Beer (2004, 20) suggested, should be on 'reaching [out to] people where they are and identifying needs within the community and trying to meet those needs.' Hence, some churches have developed specialist ministries - caring for people with drug or alcohol, mental health, debt, or offending problems. Others have found their vocation through a 'Fresh Expression' of being church, such as: Breakfast Church, Café Church, Messy Church, or 'Open the Book' assemblies in primary schools. Brierley (2006, 38) described Fresh Expressions as, 'one of the names commonly given to new types of churches.' The informality of the settings provide opportunities for participants to shape the way in which the gospel message is 'communicated to an unfamiliar culture' (Spencer 2005, 177-8). So for Spencer (op cit) this can be achieved by, 'using language that connects rather than alienates,' by 'developing worship and liturgy that inspires rather than bemuses' and by 'telling stories that enthuse rather than bore listeners.' Thus 'The church is being



re-imagined and recalled to its primary task' according to Brierley (2006, 38).

The relationship between churches and communities can be a mutually beneficial, interdependent one. Whereas churches (through the gifts of members) can hold the potential to empower local people to help themselves, community commitment can itself be important for the wholeness of individuals, according to Nazir-Ali, because, 'Our personalities are shaped not only by our parents and our earliest experiences, but also by the wider community' (Nazir-Ali 2001, 35). Similarly, communities can hold the potential to be a source, not only of new church members, but also of identity, through the shared experiences of participants (in for example, community meals, family fun days, or nurturing projects), and the retelling of these experiences which can impart 'a sense of belonging.' Thus Elaine Graham (1996, 113) held that, 'Storytelling defines the shape of a community and helps locate individual meaning and identity.' For Beer (2004, 123), 'spiritual growth and developing commitment happens not in isolation, but in community.' In fact an important finding of the 2005 English Church Census was that large churches, 'are invariably heavily involved with their local communities providing many [much] needed services' (Brierley 2006, 154).

Another adaptive response which many innovative churches have made to deal with economic pressure and social change has been to form partnerships. Partnerships that is, with another church to share the cost of a building as a Local Ecumenical Partnership (Nazir-Ali 2001, 170), or with a group of 'churches together' to share the workload involved in operating a community café, for instance. Less well known are partnerships with local authorities, and charities such as CAP and the Trussell Trust (mentioned later) to help manage specialist social care projects. Within partnerships,

the partners accept that 'each tradition has its particular riches' so both are willing to consider 'what each can offer the other (Rose 2009, 132).

Among the many changes which have taken place in the UK over the time frame of the study has been the growth of ethnic groups, especially from Eastern European countries and former British colonies in Africa. This prompted (Nazir-Ali 2001, 131), to point out that if Christians from different cultures are to 'become actively involved in worship,' 'provision will have to be made for a variety of styles of worship.' What he did not mention was that where provision was not made, they would make their own if sufficient in number. Nonetheless, small groups have integrated remarkably well, as Rose (2009, 39) observed, from an Orthodox perspective, 'Even if we used several languages and styles of singing, it [the fellowship] was a powerful experience of transcending different cultures.'

From 1998 to 2005, there was a considerable rise in the proportion of people from various ethnic backgrounds attending fast-growing churches especially, according to Brierley (2006, 199). In fact Brierley (op cit, 103) estimated that in the order of 2000 churches had welcomed people from other cultures to their services in this period.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION IN SOCIETY

Given the tendency of evangelical Christians to give generously at times of crises, some important new Christian charities have emerged recently despite the influence of secularisation. Yet to survive, these charities compete for funds with churches as well as secular charities, though not in all cases. The exceptions are charities set up by churches to serve a specific purpose as part of a mission for social justice, such as the Methodist charity, Action for Children. Almost a decade ago, it was found that

while 29 per cent of evangelicals gave 5-10 per cent of their income to charities, the trend prior to the 2007-8 economic downturn was towards giving more to churches rather than to charities ([www.christian-research.org](http://www.christian-research.org)). Nevertheless, the setting-up and success of these charities, bears witness to this aspect of the importance of religion in society, especially so for its disadvantaged and marginalized members, who's plight created new challenges for social welfare charities when the recession took hold, plunging as it did, thousands of individuals and families into debt-related social and psychological problems. Mercy Ministries, a (church-based) charity set up to work with vulnerable young girls ([www.mercyministries.co.uk](http://www.mercyministries.co.uk)) is a case in point.

The charity 'Christians Against Poverty' (CAP) experienced dramatic growth due to the demand for its services from people with serious personal debt problems in the aftermath of the 2008 recession, which gave rise to widespread unemployment and financial hardship, which was aggravated by cuts in local authority services. In such circumstances, only churches and charities were able to respond in a meaningful way (Kirkby 2009). CAP is now a busy, award-winning enterprise, which offers free debt counselling through a network of 239 debt centres based in local churches in most major towns and cities, including those in Cheshire ([www.cap.org/11/02/2014](http://www.cap.org/11/02/2014)).

Another Christian charity, The Trussell Trust, which works in partnership with local churches and communities, has set up food banks in almost every town to provide basic nutrition for a growing number of families struggling to survive financially. Food parcels are most often made up from donations by church members. By March 2015, Trussell and its partner churches were operating 445 (423 in 2014) food banks in Britain. During 2016-17 the food bank network fed 1,182, 954 people experiencing

food poverty, a considerable increase on 1,109,309 in 2015-16, and 1,084,604 in 2014-15 (trusselltrust.org). The proliferation of food banks is fundamentally, more 'a collective act of human compassion on the part of Christians' (mindful of the parable in Matthew 25.35-40, which suggests that such acts are indirectly done for Jesus in the guise of others in need), than an attempt on the part of religious institutions to, opportunistically, regain some of their former importance in society, though that has been the outcome.

By February 2014, the food poverty situation had become so serious that church leaders from the Church of England, Catholic, Methodist, and Quaker traditions, wrote to the Prime Minister, alleging - as Trussell's 2013-15 statistics inferred - that changes to the benefits system had caused over half a million people to experience hunger and destitution, thereby creating what was referred to as, '*An acute moral crisis*' (BBC Radio 4 6.00 pm. News 19-20 Feb 2014). As both CAP and Trussell statistics suggest, secular attitudes are challenged when *destitution* forces *reliance* on charity from religious institutions - which have quietly emerged as the 'providers' of others' basic human needs, regardless of recipients' religious convictions.

Clearly there are still passionate views for and against, but at the very least, there are signs that the economic pressures brought about by wars, famine, drug and alcohol abuse, personal debt, poverty, and homelessness, have created needs to which churches and charities, rather than the state, responded quickly, thus, a 'gradual restoration' of the *influence* of religion in society, through the reliance on these institutions of an increasing number of disadvantaged people, has not only taken place, it is in 2017, still growing.

Over Easter 2014, ten radical, high profile, national and international events provided emphatic confirmatory evidence that a restoration of *religious significance* in society is undeniably underway, illustrating, in just two weeks, how many (varied) headline events were driven by religion.

On 14 April, the militant Islamist group, Boko Haram, in northern Nigeria, abducted from their school (and held for up to three years), over 219, mostly Christian girls, in what was described by Michelle Obama, as a deliberate attempt to deny them their educational aspirations (ostensibly in accordance with Sharia Law), and forcibly convert them to Islam. Deeply traumatized by rape, 82 were released in May 2017.

Drawing on the widespread 'traditional role' of religious institutions in conducting memorial services (one of many acknowledged by Bruce, 2003, 258), the service on 15 April 2014, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Hillsborough Stadium disaster was attended by 24,000 people ([www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk](http://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk)). The same day, the U.K. government initiated an investigation of allegations of 'infiltration' into 21 Birmingham schools by Muslim hardliners intent on pushing a strict Islamist agenda ([www.gov.uk/government/news -15/04/2014](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/-15/04/2014)), a controversy which led to calls for British values - freedom; tolerance; acceptance of personal responsibility, and respect for the law - to be taught ([www.theguardian.com/politics/2014 June 15](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/June/15)).

A few days later, David Cameron characterized Britain as a Christian country, which, atheists alleged, sowed seeds of division, but to their credit, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu leaders supported the claim. Indeed, Farooq Murai from the Muslim Council of Great Britain, remarked. "No one can deny that Britain remains largely a Christian country with deep historical and structural links to the established church" ([www.huffington](http://www.huffington)

[post.co.uk/2014/04/22](http://post.co.uk/2014/04/22)).

Meanwhile, in South Sudan, pregnant Christian Dr Miriam Ibrahim was sentenced to flogging and death by a Muslim court, for alleged apostasy and adultery. The verdict was overturned, after an international outcry (RTE News 20603310 23 June [www.rte.ie](http://www.rte.ie)).

Former prime minister, Tony Blair, unexpectedly urged that the aftermath in Ukraine of Russia's annexation of Crimea, should not distract other nations from uniting against the greater threat to global security of Islamic fundamentalism, in identifying examples of fundamentalist-led conflicts across the Middle East, Iran, Afghanistan, and Africa ([www.voiceofrussia.com/uk/news/2014\\_04\\_23](http://www.voiceofrussia.com/uk/news/2014_04_23)).

In Rome on 27th April, a million pilgrims, heads of state, and royalty, assembled to witness the unique and unprecedented canonization of two former popes (John 23rd and John Paul the 2nd), by two living popes (Benedict 16th and Francis), who were referred to by BBC commentator, cardinal Cormack Murphy-O'Connor, as '*towering figures* on the world stage of religion.' The ceremony was watched or heard by a world-wide TV and Radio audience of many millions - making it a significant *global community* event in world history (The Telegraph 28 April 2014).

According to a report from Luishi in Zhejiang Province (Telegraph 19 April 2014), Christian congregations in China have rocketed since churches began re-opening after the death of Chairman Mao in 1976. Professor F. Yang, of Purdue University and author of *Religion in China: Survival and Revival Under Communist Rule*, has estimated that by 2025, China could have 160 million churchgoers, more than the USA. Luishi has an £8 million, 5,000 capacity church for its 2,700 members. Even

so, sermons are closely monitored and house churches are still illegal. By contrast, in Xinjiang Province, Uighur Muslim practices are restricted and veils are banned. (In comparison, in 2005, London's Kingsway International Christian Centre Sunday services were reportedly being attended by over 10,000 people [Brierley 2006, 45]).

An Irish priest, Fr Ray Kelly, became a sensation when the video of his personalized version of *Hallelujah*, sung to a couple he was about to marry, received 34 million hits on YouTube in April 2014. Concomitantly, Italian nun, sister Cristina Scouccia, shot to international stardom when she sang on the 'Voice of Italy' show, to use her singing gift to evangelize. Her rendition of '*No One*' had 30 million viewings in seven days, an all time internet record ([www.guardian.com/2014/03/25](http://www.guardian.com/2014/03/25); [nytimes.com/2014/05/07](http://nytimes.com/2014/05/07)). By 5 June when sister Cristina won the competition, the total was 50 million. After explaining that this was her response to Pope Francis's call to bring the Catholic Church closer to ordinary people, she invited the live audience to join her in praying the Lord's Prayer, watched by an estimated 3.5 million TV viewers ([www.classicalite.com/2014/June 6](http://www.classicalite.com/2014/June%206)). With a total of 67,878,755 viewings, sister Cristina's rendition of '*No One*' was the second most watched YouTube video of 2014.

On this scale of receptivity, the resurgent influence of religion in society can hardly be ignored or dismissed as having lost its significance. Rather, the magnitude of the connectivity can be seen as suggesting that spiritual ambassadors' messages are less likely to encounter resistance in a secular setting when they are communicated in ways which resonate with popular culture. Consequently, the principle of adapting an element of popular culture such as music, sport, or storytelling, to reconnect with deprived young people, is being applied energetically by Christian youth leaders in



Cheshire. So The Oakhanger Project ([oakhanger.org](http://oakhanger.org)), Active Hope ([activehope.org](http://activehope.org)), Cre8 ([cre8macclesfield.org](http://cre8macclesfield.org)), Port Reach ([worthunlimited.co.uk/branch\\_portreach](http://worthunlimited.co.uk/branch_portreach)), Youth for Christ 'Fuse' events ([yfc.uk](http://yfc.uk)), and 'Open the Book' in primary schools, have become the most recent 'Fresh Expressions' of church for teenagers.

While the foregoing 'headline events' provide an illustrative snapshot of the variable nature of global events driven by religion which may have influenced or precipitated social and economic change since, other drivers of change *have* had a huge impact. The ongoing persecution of minority religious communities around the world, notably by (Sunni) Islamic State of Yazidis, Shii, and Christians in Iraq and Syria (and Coptic Egyptians in Libya); by China of Tibetan Buddhists, by Buddhists of Rohingya Muslims in Burma; and by the Islamist extremist group Boko Haram of Christians in Nigeria (in which hundreds died in each instance); has not only unleashed many passionate responses, it has re-established the *significance of religion in society* globally. The same can be said of Iranian treatment of Baha and Muslim converts to Christianity; Muslim hostility to Hindus and Christians in Pakistan; and of Jews fleeing to Israel to avoid the rising tide of anti-semitism in Europe, hence the setting-up of The Religious Liberty Commission to monitor the alarming increase in the persecution of Christians ([eauk.org/church/networks/religious-liberty-commission/4](http://eauk.org/church/networks/religious-liberty-commission/4) Feb. 2015).

So, when Al Qaeda-linked gunmen in Paris killed ten staff of the satirical magazine, 'Charlie Hebdo' for publishing offensive cartoons of Mohammed, while another shot customers at a Jewish supermarket, the ensuing worldwide publicity reaffirmed that religion has undoubtably *not lost its social significance*. Rather, that in societies characterized by rushing, superficiality, materialism, individualism, and 'secularism'



(‘An ideology that opposes or is indifferent to religion’ [Childress 1986, 569]), religion appears to be increasingly more frequently thrust into the headlines, as persecution persists through prevalent religious intolerance and religious extremism. In the wake of the events in Paris, the 40 million YouTube viewings of comedian Hunza Arshad’s video, ‘Think for Yourself,’ aimed at preventing radicalization of Muslim teenagers by Islamic State extremist ideology ([bbc.co.uk/news/magazine](http://bbc.co.uk/news/magazine) 31004012-28 Jan 2015), aptly demonstrated religion’s resurgent *social significance* due to the scale of fervent religious intolerance being played out worldwide.

This was the dynamic religious, social, and economic global context preceding, and existing at the time of the survey of places of worship in Cheshire. And as such, will no doubt, have had an influence on the trends revealed by the results, especially so on the most recent trends which were not necessarily evident when Woodhead and Catto published their review in 2012. This is because, in Europe, the consequences of religious intolerance, terrorist attacks, and mass migration, intensified after 2012. Even so, since ‘religious issues’ are likely to continue to be ‘emotive topics’ in British society for some time to come, it is too early to predict what impact they might have on the growth or decline of Christianity in Britain as a whole, or indeed upon local church-community relationship trends. Woodhead’s analysis showed that the social processes at work in Britain from the 1990’s were transforming religion, ‘outside the control of the state and church’ in response to new market opportunities’ such that it became ‘more varied and multifaceted’ than before’ (Woodhead and Catto, 2012, 1). The expectation from the results of the survey is that the evolutionary processes will be shown to have continued with regard to the presence of Christianity in Cheshire.

### SECTION 3 THE FIELDWORK SURVEY

#### RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The parameters of the project were set out in the stated purpose and objectives following an evaluation of the availability of secondary data sources. To achieve the objectives accurately within the scope of accessible resources, notwithstanding the identified constraints, a logical procedure to gather, organise, analyse, and interpret the findings of the survey was followed. Guidance on survey procedure and primary data acquisition techniques, was drawn from Mozer and Kalton (1971), Lee (2000), and Swinton and Mowatt (2006).

As a reference for (and a record of) the survey, a database of active churches and other faiths and their places of worship in Cheshire (Appendix A), was for major denominations, compiled from Crockford's Clerical Directory, Catholic Directory, North Western Baptist Directory, URC Yearbook, and Methodist Circuit listings ([chestokemethodists.com/circuits.asp](http://chestokemethodists.com/circuits.asp)/April 2014). Details of Adventist, Brethren, Christadelphian, Independent Methodist, Latter Day Saints, Jehovah's Witness, Quaker, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Unitarian, and immigrant churches was less readily forthcoming, so a 'combination' of internet, local sources and maps was used to find the latter and cross-check the former institutions, because all such sources were either out of date or deficient in some way for the purposes of the study. The most comprehensive source (with links), was the Genuki church database ([genuki.org.uk/big/churchdb/](http://genuki.org.uk/big/churchdb/)14 April 2014), but even this was far from complete and contained errors ([achurchnearyou.com.uk/cheshire/](http://achurchnearyou.com.uk/cheshire/)30 May 2014; [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheshire/List\\_of\\_churches\\_in\\_Cheshire/](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheshire/List_of_churches_in_Cheshire)1 May 2014).

A pilot study, over an earlier time frame, of two (Halton and Warrington) of the eight 1974 Cheshire Boroughs (Rainbow 2007), was carried out - noting Mozer & Kalton's (1971, 47-8) recommendations - as a precursor to the present study, to determine what questions should be asked, what form prospective findings might take, what information was (or was not) likely to be available, and therefore, what parameters were practically feasible and achievable (Swinton and Mowatt (2006,70).

Primary data on places of worship was obtained by personal visit to assess the existing situation, that is, whether or not a place of worship was still present and being used for worship (not converted for residential or commercial use), and to look for signs of extensions or modernization. Pertinent dates of updating were sought from church administrators, websites, or newsletters. Information on the location of new church buildings not shown on maps, and *hidden* churches which hire public buildings such as schools, libraries, or community centres for worship, was obtained unobtrusively (as advised by Lee 2000, 3), from church officials at services or social events. Visitations were preceded, or followed up by, checking church websites for the required details. Although not all churches have an up to date website, many of those that do, provide an interesting, succinct overview of innovative churches' evolving commitment to community social care and support for particular charities.

Finding reliable secondary data on churches which had closed within the time frame was exceptionally challenging, especially so with regard to those which had been demolished (later), so recourse for closure dates had to be made to 'local historian' sources, such as Forest (2001), Dolan (2009), and libraries, or to archival websites like [www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/chapels/cheshire](http://www.myprimitivemethodists.org.uk/chapels/cheshire); [fhsc.org.uk/2015](http://fhsc.org.uk/2015); [genuki](http://genuki).

org.uk/cgi-bin/churches; or national archives.gov.uk/searchthearchives. Even the location of some churches was problematic, because most AA and OS maps were inconsistent in *showing* some church buildings which had been demolished, closed, or converted to secular use years before the respective publication date, and *not showing* new church buildings - built before publication - or other active churches. This was particularly true of minor denomination buildings, and those belonging to other faiths. In Ellesmere Port, the 'inconsistency' was typically apparent in three chapels (now nurseries) and a church, which had been 'closed' for over 25 years, which *were shown* (implying that they were active shortly before the publication date); whereas three *active* Catholic churches and a Salvation Army church, were *not shown*. Surprisingly, in the same area, a relatively new Brethren Gospel Hall and a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, were shown on OS (2008) maps, which do not normally show minor denomination or free church buildings.

Comprehensive geographic coverage of the catchment area (Cheshire County) was achieved by systematically following the AA (2008, ii-iii) 217 cell grid of the county, working from west to east, then east to west, progressively from north to south. Except that is, in towns and linked urban areas, where there were many churches in relatively close proximity, which were more conveniently surveyed together, and also listed together in Appendix A (in alphabetical order) under the name of the town.

Given the industrialization and urbanisation of the two northern boroughs (and likely influence of the New Town Development Corporation *Joint Use* Planning Policy), the inclusion in the survey of the rural boroughs of Cheshire West and Chester, and also Cheshire East, made for a well-balanced sample overall.

## FIELDWORK SURVEY: FILTER PROCEDURE

✧ List PLACES OF WORSHIP NAME / ADDRESS / WEBSITE

Use denominational reference works: e.g. CE, RC, Baptist, Methodist, URC.

Then websites, maps, local searches, and libraries, for Pentecostal, IM/CF, Brethren,

JW, JCLDS, Quaker, Primitive Methodist, RCGG, WEGM, etc.

✧ VISIT BUILDING USED FOR WORSHIP & WEBSITE or CONTACT CHURCH

✧ IDENTIFY or CONFIRM the church:

Denomination and Location

Local Authority Borough

Evidence of an extension or modernization

Historic Details: Year Opened or Founded if new, and

Year Closed or Disbanded if the church is no longer active:

DEDICATED OLD BUILDING <1990		DEDICATED NEW BUILDING >1990		SHARED PRIVATE or HIRED BUILDING <1990	
IF ACTIVE	IF CLOSED	IF ACTIVE	IF CLOSED	ACTIVE	DISBANDED
extended or	where moved	yr opened	moved to?	year	moved to?
modernized?	to or merged	extended or	or merged	started?	merged with?
in which year?	with? or	modernized?	with? or		or year
if after 1990	yr closed?		yr closed?		disbanded?

✧ Note special community projects (e.g. CAP, food bank, care of homeless)

✧ Follow up visit / research distant churches in advance by checking website

✧ Add relevant details to Appendix A, B, or C, and Tables 1 and 2

✧ Is the building shared with another church?



## SURVEY PARAMETERS AND ATTRIBUTES

Sample Size: 2015 active total 680 + 105 closures (Table 2 + 4) = 785 churches.

The Sample Frame, after elimination of (at least 57) closures before 1990, was:

67 places of worship in Halton, 2011 population 125,700; 30 square miles  
315 places of worship in Cheshire East 2011 population 370,700; 455 square miles  
257 places of worship in Cheshire West & Chester 2011 population 330, 200; 350 sq. m  
146 places of worship in Warrington, 2011 population 202,228; 70 square miles  
(cheshireeast.gov.uk; cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk 13 February 2014; halton.  
gov.uk; warrington.gov.uk; 29 April 2014).

### Accuracy

As far as it was possible to establish from the empirical research, documentary analysis, relevant websites, and ecumenical contacts, the survey sample total included at least 98 per cent of all churches and other faiths active in Cheshire within the chosen time frame (Appendix A). The personal visit element of the procedure validated and/or corrected the documentary evidence. Information obtained orally was checked by asking the same question(s) of more than one contact. The answers were then referred back to documentary sources to verify. This critical auditing was considered necessary, if survey findings were to be reported with confidence as valid research results. While time-consuming, the 'personal visitation' method was chosen to obtain the most complete picture practicable, of the existential reality of each situation, and thus avoid missing anomalies, or misinterpreting an incomplete picture through a '*failure to fully investigate sources*' (Hanson 1997, 164). It further avoided the low response rates typical of postal survey methods (as in the varying levels of

response to Brierley's English Church Census survey series (Brierley 2006, xx). In the event, several unknown churches, not evident on any published source, would not otherwise, have been discovered.

#### Religious Representation

All Christian denominations (Trinitarian, non-Trinitarian, Greek Orthodox, Latvian Lutheran) and other faiths (Buddist, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh) present in each area. Neither a Jewish presence, nor new religious sect were represented in the findings; although the Light and Life Gypsy Church in Sandbach, one of 20 in the UK - who regard themselves as Pentecostal - might be perceived by others as being a sect.

#### Time Frame

25 years from 1 January 1990 to 31 December 2015.

Primary data from the survey was gathered from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015, then retrospectively until most missing dates were settled.

#### Classification of Data

Attributes noted - as necessary and sufficient for the purpose of the study - were whether the venue used by a Christian church, or other faith (if not active before 1990), was: new [N]; a new hire [Nh]; extended [E]; or modernized [M]. Additional classification of the various combinations of ecumenical partnership found, was refined as the survey progressed (see presentation and analysis) to incorporate the wide-ranging situational variability and the locational mobility. Treatment of named churches in each group was recorded to show how results were calculated, to make possible a re-classification, or re-calculation if required (to consolidate objectivity, impartiality, and consistency of interpretation).

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

The retrospective benchmark of 56 active churches in Halton, 281 in Cheshire East, 227 in Cheshire West and Chester; and 103 in Warrington, in January 1990, was calculated by subtracting new churches + new hires from the 2015 registered total (Tables 1 and 2), then adding back the closures over 25 years, therefore:

$$1990 \text{ total} = 2015 \text{ total} - [N + Nh] + C$$

$$\text{So for Halton: } 52 - [8 + 3] + 15 = \mathbf{56} \text{ in 1990}$$

$$\text{For Cheshire East: } 283 - [21 + 13] + 32 = \mathbf{281} \text{ in 1990}$$

$$\text{For Cheshire W \& Chester: } 226 - [15 + 15] + 31 = \mathbf{227} \text{ in 1990}$$

$$\text{For Warrington: } 119 - [16 + 27] + 27 = \mathbf{103} \text{ in 1990}$$

$$\text{Cheshire Total: } 680 - (60 + 58) + 105 = \mathbf{667} - \text{a net gain of } \mathbf{8} \text{ churches overall.}$$

Analysis of the findings (Appendices A, B, and C) within each of the four local authority boroughs, was by the number of closures, openings, extensions and modernizations in each year (Table 1), by denomination (Table 2), by new church denomination (Table 3), and by closed church denomination (Table 4). Other community commitments and adaptations to change were noted in Appendix A. Premises converted for use as mosques or temples by other faiths were included (separately) in Appendix A, whether new or hired, but were not included in Table 1. In cases in which a closed church building was soon replaced by a new one (Table 1), both old and new were logged in the analysis to demonstrate the full extent and date profile of responses or adaptations. Although there was no net change in such cases, it was helpful to maintain consistency over time by including all closures and all openings, as well as changes in location, name, or denomination.



To avoid double counting, only the most recent name, or location, of churches which had relocated was included. Churches which had vacated a dedicated building or a hired venue, but were still meeting in the church hall; a member's home; a 'shared' church building; or in other hired premises, were not strictly 'closures' but strategic relocation or replacement decisions, so these 'so-called closures' were identified accordingly in Appendix B. It is from such cases that misinterpretation of misleading or ambiguous closure statistics can easily arise.

In cases where members of a closed church building had merged with another church of the same (e.g. St Helen, Witton with St Thomas, Rudheath, Northwich) or a different denomination (St Michael with St Thomas CE & Hough Green Methodist, Widnes), the closure was classed as such and the combined church treated as one. Conversely, churches which shared another's building, but otherwise remained separate entities, were treated as independent churches.

The Local Ecumenical Partnerships in which two denominations jointly funded both a building and a minister to take *separate services*, were treated as *two* churches (e.g. Church of the Resurrection CE & St Bridget RC, Warrington; and St Basil RC & All Saints CE, Widnes). In these cases, each church is shown on a separate line in Appendix A, and shown as 1 + 1 in Table 2. But Ecumenical Partnerships between two (e.g. Beechwood West CE/M, Runcorn; St Philip CE/M, Westbrook), or three denominations (e.g. St Mark CE/M/URC, and Bethesda CE/M/URC, Runcorn), in which the *same congregation* participates in all services, were treated as *one* church and are shown on the same line in Appendix A.

## INTERPRETATION AND EVALUATION

Appendix C and Table 4 demonstrate that of the 105 closed church buildings which could have been interpreted as symptoms of decline, 22 (21 per cent) were in fact, quite the opposite. An investigation of local sources revealed that the majority of these so-called closures were actually intentional strategic *relocation* or *replacement* decisions, rather than negative symptoms. Closing uneconomic buildings in order to replace them with energy efficient new ones is sometimes crucial for progress to be made, or for survival - as for St Ambrose RC, St Augustine RC, and Our Lady's RC, sited at opposite ends of Latchford, Warrington (Appendix A), which were replaced by the ultra-modern Cardinal John Henry Newman RC building, which was located midway between the three older church buildings.

This striking finding not only emphasized the value of local knowledge, but it also prompted the question; how many such closures, historically, were taken at *face value*, resulting in the *reality* of what really occurred being missed or misinterpreted? Hence, commentators in the past appear to have focussed too much on closures (or declining attendance), rather than on how closures in a particular area were related to subsequent associated positive developments. A case in point was the closure of Cornerstone Chapel, Runcorn (Appendix C, 2009), which was rebuilt as the multi-purpose £900,000 Hope Corner Academy (Appendix B, 2013), to provide education and care for young people with Special Educational Needs ([hopecorner.co.uk](http://hopecorner.co.uk)). This is a good example of a 'social care initiative' led by a 'driven' church in partnership with a local authority, an arrangement model which Beer (2004, 17) recommended as an essential aspect of outreach to achieve church growth.

Indeed, given that many 'closures' were not what they appeared to be historically, some supporters of secularism were undoubtedly misled by 'ambiguous' closure statistics. So, Hanson's (1997, 164) criticism regarding the '*failure to investigate sources of data*' by proponents of secularism has been substantiated by the survey findings. This is true also, of secular media reports which seize on statistics which purport to show that attendances at church (or the social significance of religious institutions), are on the wain, while ignoring the fact that churchgoers move from the United Reformed Church, Catholic, and Methodist churches - the three most rapidly declining denominations up to 2005 according to Brierley (2006, 30), to Pentecostal and other new churches, which may be less likely to conduct weekly attendance counts. This 'turnover' can give rise to misinterpretation, negative generalizations, or oversimplification, which mask the positive developments.

The analysis by denomination within each of the four boroughs (Table 2 & Chart 2), confirms the rich diversity of worship style options available, albeit that the variety of traditions is representative of historical fragmentation. However, there is a possibility of minor resurgent unity, as Brethren, Christadelphian, Presbyterian and Primitive Methodist churches are lost and subsumed. The results also show that different denominations often work together ecumenically to support or operate one of the 32 food banks, or operate a community cafe, of which there were 18. Kingsway [CE/Br] Cafe, St Peter's Centre Cafe, and Wesley Methodist Centre Cafe, in Chester, were typical examples. In fact 16 (73 per cent) of the 22 Cheshire towns surveyed had a *Churches Together* web site (Appendix A), or other form of ecumenical forum, in addition to regular combined services.

Table 2 Denominational Analysis of Active Churches in Cheshire 2015

DENOMINATION	HALTON	CH EAST	CW&C	WARRINGTON	NUMBER	PERCENT
C of England	*13	*111	*92	*31	*247	36.5
Methodist	*4	*69	*41	*14	*128	18.9
R Catholic	*9	16	19	*14	*58	9.5
Polish Catholic		3	1	2	6	
Pentecostal	5	18	10	*13	*46	6.8
Non-denom	4	7	15	7	33	4.7
URC	*0	*9	*10	5	*24	3.6
* +EP's						
EP's CE/M	5	3+1	1	1	11	
CE/RC	1+1			1+1	4	
CE/P				1	1	
CE/M/URC	2				2	
B/URC		1			1	
B/M			1		1	
M/URC	1		4		5	
					25	3.7
Baptist	1	11	*7	4	23	3.4
Jehovah's W	3	8	5	1	17	2.5
Independent	1		4	8	13	1.9
Brethren	1	4	2	3	10	1.5
C Fellowship		4		5	9	1.3
Salvation A		2	4	1	7	1.0
Quaker		4	2	1	7	1.0
Latter Day S	1	3		2	6	<1
Unitarian		4	1	1	6	
Presbyterian			3	1	4	
Adventist		1		1	2	
Christadelphian		3	1		4	
Greek Orthodox		1	1		2	
Welsh M			1		1	
Chr Science			1		1	
Latvian Ev L				1	1	
Total	52	283	226	119	680	100

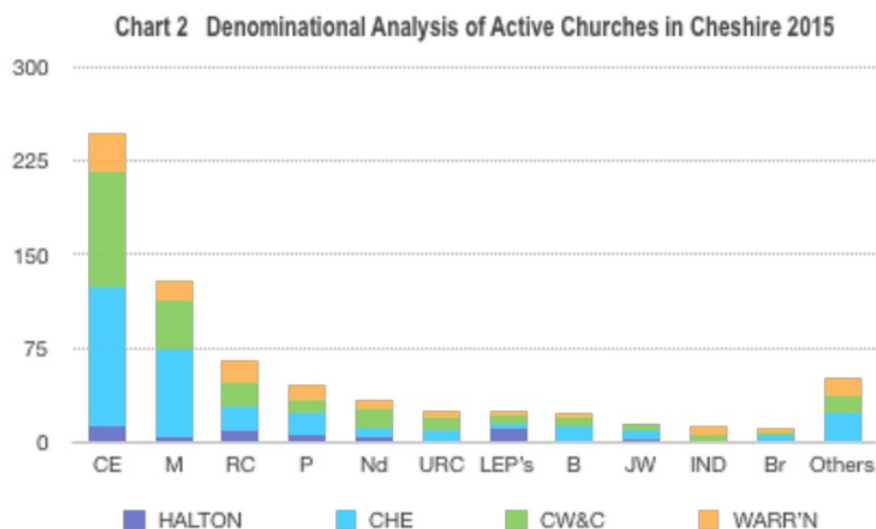
Source: Appendix A.

n.b. Churches of differing denominations which share a building via a hiring arrangement are not included in the Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP) figures.

The two CE/RC Ecumenical Partnerships (Widnes and Warrington) are probably unique.

The same may also be true of the CE/P partnership at The Ford in Chapelford, Warrington.

+1 Denotes an LEP with two separate denominational congregations (i.e. two churches).



Source: Table 2.

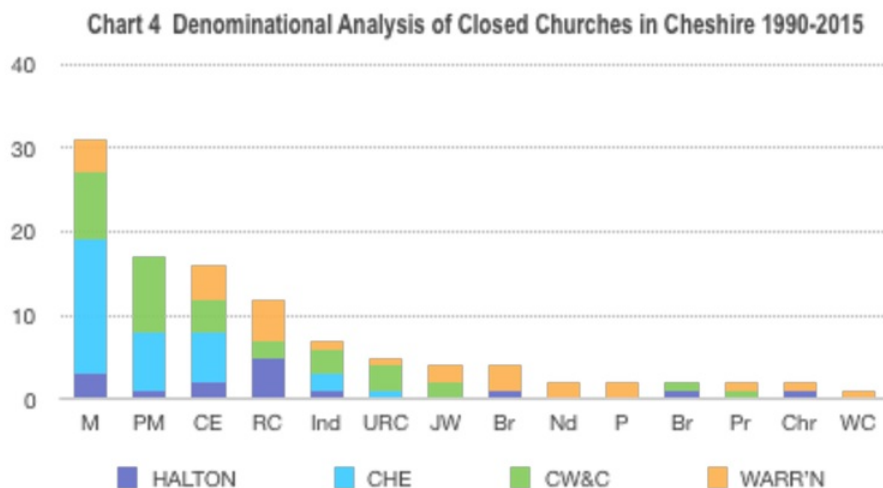
**Table 4 Denominational Analysis of Churches Closed in Cheshire 1990-2015**

DENOMINATION	HALTON	CH EAST	CW&C	WARRINGTON	Σ Closed	%
Baptist				1	1	
Brethren	1			3	4	
Christadelphian			1	1	2	
Ch of England	2	6	4	4	16	15
Independent	1	2	3	1	7	
J Witnesses				2	2	
Methodist +WM	3	16	8	4	31	29
Non Denom'l				2	2	
Pentecostal				2	2	
Primitive M	1	7	9		17	16
Presbyterian	1		1		2	
R Catholic	5		2	5	12	11
URC		1	3	1	5	
Welsh Calv.	1			1	2	
Total	15	32	31	27	105	100

Source: Appendix C.

Table 4 & Chart 4 show that 48 (45 per cent) of the 'closures' found were Methodist or Primitive Methodist. Together these churches represent 29 per cent of the active 1990 Methodist total. However, 11 of these churches were subsequently replaced by new buildings (e.g. Trinity Methodist, Widnes), while others were 'restored' (e.g. the





Source: Table 4.

£1.0 m Nantwich Methodist); 'extended' (Coppenhall M, Crewe); or 'modified' (e.g. the £0.8 m Trinity Methodist, Ellesmere Port; 'Fresh Expressions' Methodist, Crewe) to pursue new *visions* of responding to changes in society. At least 18 churches in the thirty Methodist circuits in Cheshire have extended or modernized, which seriously challenges the generally held view that Methodism is failing rapidly. However the 12 Catholic closures, which represent 17 per cent of the 1990 Catholic total, imply a more critical situation, because the rationalization decisions taken have led to only three new Catholic churches (Our Lady's, Runcorn; St Monica's, Appleton; John H. Newman, Latchford), being built over the past 25 years (App. B). The 16 Church of England closures which represent 6.5 per cent of the 1990 CE total, have likewise resulted in only three new building replacements (St James, Westbrook, St Ann, Orford, and Christchurch, Northwich). Change, as Macdonald (2004,105) noted, 'can be painful and traumatic' so for Christians, few things 'cause more distress than the struggle to come to terms with the loss of a familiar church building.' Yet confidence in

the future will come, if they 'reflect together on changing social realities, and develop a shared vision of new evangelical opportunities in their communities.' Indeed, Table 1 shows that some confident churches extended or modernized their building up to three times over the 25 year time frame. The opposite was also found, in that within each borough there were small, elderly congregations, struggling financially in large buildings, with little prospect of attracting and/or retaining newcomers.

Potential dangers associated with the rapid growth of new Pentecostal churches also came to light (Table 3). At least one Pentecostal church in Widnes, and another three in Warrington - where services were regularly attended by up to 300 people - all experienced schism between 2011 and 2013, despite having been thriving churches. Internal disagreements, which can result in a mass exodus, can strike at any time, especially after a period of rapid expansion. Although one church's loss may become another's gain when disillusioned members move on to another church, 'division' is painful. In his scriptural review of the causes, safeguards against, and healing of 'splits,' pastor Francis Frangipane (2002, 64) conceded that often, it is 'pastors' who 'are the cause of problems in churches,' due to their own insecurities, sinfulness, or unwillingness to take advice. In this he may be right, as in the majority of the above-mentioned cases, pastoral intransigence played a part. Such situations are a double disadvantage for a church because they not only result in a sudden, unsettling fall in attendances, they also inhibit potential growth - because in an analysis of key growth factors, Brierley identified *leadership* as the 'prime motivator' (Brierley 2006, 208, 252).

Another significant finding across all Cheshire boroughs (with the current exception of Halton) may constitute an emerging (economic) paradigm shift. The pattern was

evident in the fact that of the new mainly Pentecostal churches, 59 (52 per cent) were typically 'hidden' in hired schools, community centres, other *public* buildings, or *private* houses. Commercial venues such as Costa Coffee cafes and council offices were also in use (Appendix A). An openness to *relocation* and a readiness to move came from an attitude of not wanting to be tied to a building. Therefore, in addition to Davie's (1994) '*believing without belonging*' theory, we now have the phenomenon of *public worship without owning*, which is gradually becoming a new order - largely unseen to the general public, other than via the internet. An important secondary outcome of the economic expediency of hired buildings, is that these churches have challenged and re-conceptualized the traditional view described by Montefiore (1993, 185), that 'Church buildings are sacramental, outward and visible structures which mediate spiritual and inner meaning.' The conversion of former secular buildings by Christian (e.g. Christ Church, Northwich), and nine cases of other faiths, to religious use (Appendix A), has begun a reversal of the opposite trend. The increasing trend towards new hiring arrangements, reinforces Macdonald's (2004, 105) pragmatic contention, that 'discipleship' should not be 'linked to mortar and stone.'

In Halton (Runcorn and Widnes), evidence of a gradual change emerged in the shift from large institutional denomination representation (Tables 2, 3, 4) towards the new evangelical and non-denominational churches, and Local Ecumenical Partnerships. An historical preponderance of Catholic churches in Widnes, resulted in 2015, in a radical rationalization in working class *town centre areas* which possessed too many churches for a post industrial revolution, shrinking population. This corroborated Gill's (1993, 14) Victorian 'over provision' thesis, as did the most hard-hit area for closures -



Macclesfield, where, only a decade after the closure of three huge church buildings in the mid-1980's, three more (Beech Lane PM, Park Road PM, and St George CE) equally large symbols of the era of silk trade wealth, closed in the 1990's, together with another three in nearby Bollington. Without the impact of such 'over-provision' losses, the results across Halton Borough and Cheshire East would have been much more positive ([www.thornber.net/cheshire/htmlfiles/macclechap](http://www.thornber.net/cheshire/htmlfiles/macclechap)-28 December 2016).

Conversely, the new Local Ecumenical Partnerships in Halton formed part of an important major finding across Cheshire, involving 25 churches (10 in Halton; 5 in CHE; 6 in CW&C; and 4 in Warrington), all open to working ecumenically, which in various denominational combinations have covenanted to share their building (Table 2). At least a third of these may have been influenced by Warrington and Runcorn New Town Development Corporation's policy of applying the *joint use* concept to most new church, school or community buildings - given the prevalence of Local Ecumenical Partnerships in Runcorn, although members of the two CE/M/URC churches insisted that the triple partnership idea came from them. While various combinations of sharing arrangements other than LEP's were found, no interfaith partnerships were revealed by the survey. In total, 83 churches (12 per cent) were found to be sharing premises in one form or other.

In keeping with the fact that Polish is now the second most common language in the UK, according to the 2011 Census ([dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2270638](http://dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2270638), 3 December 2014), the results revealed that there are at least five Catholic churches in Cheshire which share their place of worship with a local Polish Catholic community; in Chester, Crewe, Northwich, and Warrington. St Benedict's in Warrington also shares with the

Czech and Slovak communities. In Northwich, an entire former Catholic church building and its community facilities has been taken over and renamed 'Our Lady of Czestochowa.' Uniquely, Chester and Macclesfield were home to a Greek Orthodox church, and Warrington, to a well-attended Latvian Evangelical Lutheran church. In the case of other faiths, whereas Northwich, Runcorn, and Warrington had Buddhist centres, and Chester, Northwich and Warrington had a Muslim mosque and Islamist centre, only Warrington had a Hindu, and a Sikh temple. No synagogues were found.

From an immigration perspective, churches are becoming increasingly cosmopolitan as many ethnic community groups grow. Five churches less than three miles apart, had members from China, India, Nigeria, Philippines, Romania, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, which reflects the national trend reported by Brierley (2006, 103). The friendliness and racial harmony in church settings, stand in contrast to the racial tensions in secular society. Brierley (2006, 199) further reported that, 'almost half black and Chinese churchgoers' are 'involved with growing successful churches.'

Overall, the most important finding was that the research results demonstrated a marginal increase in churches over the time frame studied (Table 1), as well as a steady increase in all indicators of growth. So, in Halton there was a net loss of 4 churches; whereas In CHE, a net gain of 2. In CW&C there was a net loss of 1; but in Warrington, there was a net gain of 16 (Tables 3 and 4). Hence there was a total gain of 13 churches (1.9 per cent) which is not statistically significant, but a modest, *positive* outcome, which vindicated the inspiration for the study. Moreover, the large number of new buildings, extensions, and modernizations found, implied that the churches concerned had experienced some growth in building usage, which in turn

suggests that the national decline is not universal.

Some recently evolved church roles were revealed by the investigation of church websites. While continuing with their traditional role in providing for mums and toddlers, cubs, scouts, youth clubs, crafts, and coffee mornings, churches had variously updated and transformed their image in their local community through 'Café Church,' 'Shopper,' 'Pram' and 'Biker' services. Food banks, charity shops, lunch clubs, legal advice, debt counselling, and internet cafés, are becoming the norm, and not just in town centres. A Biker service for example, takes place in a rural Methodist church at Rixton; 'Sanctuary Café' (an ecumenical enterprise) in Lymm village, and 'Café Encounter,' alongside an out of town shopping centre. Moreover, having a website was a good indicator of not only what, but how well churches were doing in terms of drawing people into their community activities. This was especially true if the website was impressively informative ([lymbaptistchurch.com](http://lymbaptistchurch.com)), evangelically driven ([kingschurchwarrington.co.uk](http://kingschurchwarrington.co.uk)), clear at a glance ([stpauls-penketh.co.uk](http://stpauls-penketh.co.uk)), warmly welcoming ([stwinefrideslymm.org](http://stwinefrideslymm.org); [stmarysacton.com](http://stmarysacton.com); [peoverchurches.org.uk](http://peoverchurches.org.uk)), photographically brilliant ([warminghamchurch.weebly.com](http://warminghamchurch.weebly.com)), or ecologically committed ([christion-ecology.org.uk](http://christion-ecology.org.uk)).

Since a website is often a visitor's first point of contact with a church, it is obviously important that the website presents 'church' as 'a positive and friendly experience' - as demonstrated by the above examples. Therefore 'websites have huge potential for outreach and to create a good first impression' according to Brierley (2006, 254).

Outstanding models of church proactive *care in the community* were evident in the evolving projects operated by the most innovative churches, such as Kings, Great

Sankey, Life Church, Latchford, and St Barnabus, Macclesfield. to name but a few. Partnerships with local authorities on special projects aimed at marginalized people in society, such as the 'Lighthouse' drug and alcohol abuse rehabilitation programme ([thefoundry.co.uk](http://thefoundry.co.uk)); care of homeless people with mental health issues ([salvationarmy.org.uk/nwe/JamesLeeHouse](http://salvationarmy.org.uk/nwe/JamesLeeHouse)), education of pupils with special educational needs ([hopecorner.co.uk](http://hopecorner.co.uk)), and - since the 2008 economic crisis - 'food banks,' all seem to be restoring the relevance of churches to their local communities in what has been referred to as, 'The Quiet Revolution of Restitution' (BBC Radio 4, 2006). 'Worth Unlimited' for example 'is a development of the Cre8 Youth and Community Project based at St Barnabus Church' on a very deprived estate, which began as a 'Churches Together' initiative. Through 'transformational partnerships' it works with disadvantaged young people 'to help them build hope, unlock their potential and realise their own worth' ([worthunlimited.co.uk](http://worthunlimited.co.uk) - macclesfield - 20 January 2015).

Although the definition of church on page 6 was at the outset regarded as being sufficiently broad to encompass most new ways of being (or doing) 'church', even this definition was stretched by some enterprising forms of 'Fresh Expression' such as The Welcome Café, Knutsford ([thewelcome.org.uk](http://thewelcome.org.uk)), the Hassall Road Bookshop, Alsager ([cheshiresouth.org.uk](http://cheshiresouth.org.uk)), New Song Cafe, Warrington ([freshexpressions.org.uk](http://freshexpressions.org.uk)), the Daily Bread Café, Ellesmere Port ([ellesmereportmethodist.org.uk](http://ellesmereportmethodist.org.uk)). and the The Quench Café, Culcheth ([ccculcheth.org.uk](http://ccculcheth.org.uk)). These are all good examples of an adaptive 'expansion' of the use of a church building in response to social change by forward-thinking churches, eager to restore their relevance to the local community, by reaching out to people in the contextual reality of their daily lives and needs.



The Trinity Methodist (healthy fare) Daily Bread Café, and The Quench Café, are visionary examples of community-orientated, transformational modernization aimed at reconnecting with people in a new way - a manifestation of what, presumably, Nazir-Ali (2001, 35) had in mind when he chose, '*Shapes of the church to come*,' as the title of his book. Beer (2004, 17) was more direct in declaring that it is, 'time to change attitudes and buildings and practices in order to reach people for Christ.' All the above except the Hassall Road Bookshop, continue to hold services as before.

Some churches were found to have expanded in a more traditional, yet equally effective, 'strategic' way. The adaptations or modifications carried out at St Mary, Alsager, St John the Baptist, Knutsford, St Michael, Macclesfield, and St George, Poynton, were truly amazing, from a *quality of design and workmanship* point of view, despite, or perhaps because of, listed building constraints.

In the 2001 Census, 81 per cent of the Cheshire population (542,413) identified themselves as Christian; 19 per cent did not have a religion, or did not respond; and 1.2 per cent belonged to other religions [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheshire-8 May 2014]. But, by 2011, only 71 per cent claimed to be Christian, 26 per cent did not have a religion, and 2.4 per cent belonged to other religions. A explanation for the apparent decline in Christianity may be that in 2011 some 2001 'nominal' Christian respondents were perhaps more willing to admit to not having religion. On the other hand, the survey of Cheshire churches revealed that since 2011, the number of new churches had marginally exceeded those closed, and that the number of dedicated church buildings modernized had doubled (Table 1 and Charts 1a and 1b).

TABLE 1 ANNUAL INDICATIONS OF CHANGE IN HALTON, CHESHIRE EAST,  
CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER, AND WARRINGTON CHURCHES 1990-2015

YEAR CLOSED	NEW	NEW HIRE	EXTENDED	MODERNIZED	TOTAL
1990	-	Alsager CC	Appleton IM	Bruera CE ~	Glazebrook M
	~ Christ FG Shavn	Bethel Northw -	Brown Knowl M~	Lymm Methodist~	
	Frederick St PM	Frodsham M -	Christleton M ~	St Gabriel Alsage~	
	-	KHJW Saltney -	Haslington URC~	St Matthew Stretton~	
	-	Northwich M -	H Trinity Rainow	Welsh Pr Chester	
	-	Northwich SA -	St Chad Handforth West	St CF Crewe	
	-	Nantwich P -	Stockton Heath CF-		
	-	St James CE -	Bethesda St Hth~	-	2 8 1 8 6
1991	Kinsey St Con M	Trinity EP Wid	Beechwood West	Ch of Resurrection	Bollington M~
	Lower Wych PM	St Michael Neston		St John Knutsford	St Andrew M Aston~
	~ Oscroft IM	-	-	St Michael Chester	St Helen Witton
					3 2 1 3 3
1992	Cotebrook PM	St Monica RC -	St Mary RC~	Christ Ch Padgate	
	Oughtrington M	Runcorn Ind B -	Christ Ch Padgate	H Trinity Hurdsfield	
	Winwick M	-	-	Newchurch Cul	3 2 0 2 3
1993	Burwardsley PM	Tytherington Macc	Lymm Baptist	Christ Ch Wharton	
	Churton PM	Wellspring M Cong	High Legh St John	St James Audlem	
	Pipers Ash PM	Wellspring CC P	Goostrey M	St Mary Pulford	3 3 0 3 3
1994	Elmwood URC	Jireh Brethren	Calvary Chapl CF	CaldyValley M/URC	
	Christ Ch E Port	Emmaus CF -	StMichaelRuncorn	Glazebury M	
	St John CE Crewe	Hope Corner P -	Glazebury M	Goostrey M	
	-	Chr Life Boll P-	St Mark Chester	St Thomas E Port	
	-	-	St Michael Crewe	-	3 4 1 5 3
1995	St Ann [1] Warr	SArmy Elles P	Birchwood CC	Oakhanger M~	Alderley Edge M
	PM Park St Macc	KHJW Runc	New Life P	MSCC Frodsham	Christ Ch Runcorn
	Welsh Calvinist	Malpas M/URC -	NTCG Crewe	MSCC Frodsham	
	-	Welcome Knuts	St Helen Hollins G	St John Sandbach	3 4 2 4 4
1996	Emmanuel CE	-	Christ Ch Wilmsl	Hood Manor M	CC St Paul Crewe
	Spurstow PM	-	Kettleshulme M	Kettleshulme M	
	High Legh IM	-	St M & M Burleydam	Burtonwood M	3 0 1 3 3
1997	St George Macc	Elmw'd URC -	Christ Ch Wharton	Holy Trinity CE	
	St Partick RC	Hope Church P-	-	Hope Alive	2 2 0 1 2
1998	Beech Ln Macc	Macclesfield M	RofL Wilmslow	CaldyValley M/UR	Culcheth M~

	Chedford M Mid	NLCC P Crewe	-	Sandiway M	St Mark Runcorn~	
	-	High Legh Centre		St John Hartford	St Osw Brereton Gn	
	-	-	-	Audlem M	~Shavington M	2 3 1 4 4
1999	Allgreave M	JCLDS Sankey	-	Neston M	St Oswald Worleston~	
	Buerton IM	-	-	Padgate M Warr	St Mary Gt Budworth	
	KHJW Latchford	-	-	-	Neston M	3 1 0 2 3
2000	KHJW Orford	St Ann [2] Warr-		Broad Ln M Nantw	Lymm Baptist~	
	Meadowbank PM-	-	-	Christleton M	Broken Cross M	
	Trinity WM Frodsh	Middlewich M		Hoole Baptist LH	Stockton Heath M	
	St Thomas Widnes	-	-	St MaryWeaverham	Chester Quaker ~	
	Wellspring CC P	-	-	-	Widnes B	5 2 0 4 5
2001	St Heath Ev	G Hall Crewe	Com Ch Warr P	Thomas Risley URC	All Saints Thelwall	
	Gorse Covert B	KHJW Latchfd	Connection Nthw	Salvation Army W	Quaker M House	
	St Faith Pr Brook	KHJW Orford	Olive Branch CC	St Paul Penketh	St Bart Ch Minshull	
	Ind Moulton	KHJW Sankey	Vinelif Handforth	(The Oaks Café)	St Peter Gt Sutton	
	W Row Nantw PM	Prestbury M	Farnworthh CF	St Paul Widnes	St Thomas S Hth	
	Welsh Calv Runc	-	(now New Life CC)-	Latchford B		6 5 5 5 6
2002	Hatchmere PM~	Barnton P	New Life P Cong	All S Centre Hoole	St Mary Alsager	
	Sproston M	Christ Ch Nwich		Barnton MSt Peter	Plemsall	
	Thornton Le M CE-	-	-	St Cross Appleton	St Werburgh Ches	
	-	-	-	St John Widnes	Audlem M	3 2 1 4 4
2003	Culcheth IM	Culcheth CF	Kings Sankey P	Culcheth CF	CC St Paul Crewe	
	Harthill All S CE	Our Lady Runc	Storehouse P	Halebank M	Hoole B	
	Lymm Ev M Nd	-	Hoole Baptist	Kingsway Cafe EP	Latchford M	
	St John Bollington		Silklife P Macc~	St Edward Macc	St Stephen Cong	
	-	-	-	-	Upton URC	4 2 4 4 5
2004	Highr Disley M	-	Culcheth CC Pr	Hill Cliffe B	H Trinity Run	
	Northwich URC	-	Sandiway FG	St Joseph RC	Comberbach M	
	St Ambrose RC	-	W Ev Gospel M~	St Winefride RC	Plumley M~	
	Whiteley Green PM	-	-	Cross St P Cong	St Boniface Bunbury	
	-	-	-	St Mary Dodleston	St Joseph RC Warr	
	-	-	-	Waverton Ev	St Michael Macc	
	-	-	-	St Michael Macc	St M&M Burleydam	
	-	-	-	Waverton Ev F	Wycliffe URC	4 0 3 8 8
2005	Christadelphian	-	Elim C Life Macc	Newton URC	KHJW Widnes	
	Moore M	-	St Theodore Macc	St Barnabas CE	Sandiway Full G	

	Norris Street M	-	-	St John Widnes	St James Christleton	
	St Augustine RC	-	-	St Michl+Thomas	The Foundry P	
	St Thomas CE	-	-	Stockton Heath CF	Neston URC	5 0 2 5 5
2006	Farm G Shep CE	KHJW Runc	Sandbach B	Barnton M	Audlem B	
	St Joseph RC	Malpas	-	Helsby M	Audlem M	
	Union URC	Frodsham	-	High Legh Centre	Blakelees M Kingsley	
	-	St Thomas Parkgate	-	Knutsford M	Hope Corner P	
	-	-	-	Latchford B	Knutsford M	
	-	-	-	Risley IM ~	Padgate M Warr	
	-	-	-	Sandbach M	Sandiway M	
	-	-	-	St Martin M	St Elphin Warr	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Wistaston	
	-	-	-	-	St Paul Helsby	
	-	-	-	-	Widnes B	3 2 1 8 11
2007	~Blakenhall M	-	Forward in Faith	Broken Cr Macc?	Hood Manor M	
	~Bridgemere WM	-	-	Glazebury M	Oakhanger M	
	Congleton Edge M	-	-	Comberbach M	Comberbach M Rixton M	
	~Coole Ln M Coole	-	-	Norley M~	S Army Chester	
	Whitley M	-	-	St Mich'l Marbury	St Ambrose Widnes	
	-	-	-	-	St Helen Hollins Gn	
	-	-	-	-	St James Latchford	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Gt Sankey	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Lymm	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Neston	5 0 1 5 11
2008	Cornerstone Runc	Disley M	Chrn Fam Ch'r	St Mary Magd CE	Burtonwood M	
	~Ellesm Port W Pr	-	OFNC Bethany	Davenport M~	Ebenezer B Chester	
	-	-	Sandbach B Cof Sh	Holmes Chapel M	Holmes Chapel M	
	~Runcorn Ind B	-	Task Jesus Nd	Latchford B	Jireh Nd Warr	
	Wybunbury WM	-	-	St Bart. Wilmslow	St Alban Macc	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Alsager	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Wistaston	
	-	-	-	-	St Michael Macc	
	-	-	-	-	Norley M	4 1 4 5 9
2009	Penketh M	JCLDS Congl	New Song Café	Lymm URC	Castle CC Northwick	
	H Trinity Kerridge	-	Oasis P Warr	(Sanctuary Café)	Helsby M	



	Nantwich M	Nantwich M	RCCG Heritage	St James Audlem	Hurst M Kingsley	
	Minshull M Crw	-	St Benedict Polish	The Ascension Hall	Key Green M	
	Hightown M Crw	-	-	WM Chester	St Andrew Orford	
	-	-	-	-	St Hilda's Latchford	
	-	-	-	-	St James Audlem	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary Nantwich	
	-	-	-	-	St Paul Widnes	
	-	-	-	-	WM Chester	5 2 4 4 10
2010	Guilden Suttu PM	Calvary P Mac	Christian Bikers	Birchw'd Café Enc	Brook Chapel Br	
	Morley Green URC	JH Newman RCE	Elim CC Malpas	Bethany Ch Shop	Blakelees M Kingsley	
	Our Lady RC	NTCG Crewe	Hope Ev Crewe	L cum MV Hall	Christ Ch Oasis P E Port	
	St Johns M'n CE	Oasis E Port	RCCG Crewe	The Foundry P	Christ Ch CE Runcorn	
	St John Runc Pr	KHJW Wheelock	RCCG Fairfield	St John High Legh	Friars Green IM	
	St Oliver Pl RC	-	-	St John Hartford	Kent St IM	
	~Hough PM	-	-	-	Macclesfield URC	
	-	-	-	-	Middlewich URC	
	-	-	-	-	St Gabriel Alsager	
	-	-	-	-	St Luke CE Willaston	
	-	-	-	-	St Thomas CE Parkgate	
	-	-	-	-	St Mary CE Gt Sankey	
	-	-	-	-	Stockton Heath M	
	-	-	-	-	Sion IM Lymm	7 5 5 6 14
2011	Bulkeley PM	Penketh M	C Bikers Widnes	All Saints Daresbury	Elworth M	
	Carmen Apost P	The Ford EP	Latvian Ev Luth	Lewis Carroll Cntr	H Trinity Congleton	
	Over Alderley M	Uniting Chester	Storehouse Frods	St Chad Farndon	Little Bolligton	
	St Paul M Runc	-	-	ChristChWheelock	Lower Withington M	
	Sealand Rd URC	-	-	Christleton M~	Lymm URC	
	-	-	-	Hurst M Kingsley	Over Peover M	
	-	-	-	St George's St B	St George's St B Macc	
	-	-	-	-	~Alsager URC	
	-	-	-	-	~Brookhouse Green M	
	-	-	-	-	St Peter Duddon	
	-	-	-	-	Snelson M	
	-	-	-	-	~Wycliffe URC	5 3 3 6 12
2012	Bollington M	L&L Sandbach	City Ch Chester	Ebenezer B Chestr	Bethany P	
	Forster St Br	Br Wheelock	Freedom P Ch'r	Elworth M	Coppenhall M	

~ St Patrick Alsager-		Life Church P	Englesea-Brook M	Elworth M	
Tattenhall RC	-	LifeChurch Wilm	St Peter Elworth	H Trinity Hurdsfield	
-	-	-	(Parish Hall)	Kelsall M	
-	-	-	~ Ch Lawton (ramp)	Key Green M	
-	-	-	-	S Army Chester	
-	-	-	-	Sandbach M	
-	-	-	-	St Bart Ch Minshull	
-	-	-	-	St George Poynton	
-	-	-	-	St Mary Alsager	
-	-	-	-	St Osw Backford~ St Oswald Backford	
-	-	-	-	Trinity Halton	4 2 4 6 13
2013 Ashton Hayes M	Hope C Acad P	Adventist Warr	Salvation Army	All Saints Runc	
Bradwall WM	Saughall M	People's Orford	(Vine Café)	Bethel B Macc	
Christ Ch Crewe	-	RCCG Elles Pt P	Haslington M	Bold St M Warr	
Clive Green M	-	Saighton @4	St Peter L Budworth	Chist Church Croft	
St Anselm RC	-	Storehouse Wins	Culcheth CC Pr	Friars Green IM	
Shocklach WM	-	Vineyard Chester	(QuenchCafé)	Latchford B	
-	-	Word of Life Cong	Culcheth M	Northgate Chester	
-	-	-	-	St Ambrose Widnes	
-	-	-	-	St Bertoline Barthomley	
-	-	-	-	St Edward Macclesfield	
-	-	-	-	St James Ince	
-	-	-	-	St Luke Northwich	
-	-	-	-	St Lawrence Stoak	
-	-	-	-	St Mary Waverton	
-	-	-	-	St Michael Burtonwood	
-	-	-	-	St Oswald Chester	
-	-	-	-	Union St B Crewe	
-	-	-	-	Widnes B	6 2 7 5 18
2014 Gospel Hall Br	[NLCC see Nh		Bosley M	Alsager CC P	
Halebank M	2001 above]	-	Stockton Heath CF	Alsager WP M	
Huxley Jub PM	Castle Northw	Restore CE Crewe	St Elizabeth Ashley	UoC Chapel Chester	
Christadeln Northw		St Francis Polish	St Oswald Boll'n	Quakers Chester	
St Mark CE Dallam		Warrington CF	St Mary Astbury	Elworth M	
Wood Lanes M	-	Woolston MC P	Union St B Crewe	Friars Green IM	
-	-	-	-	Grappenhall IM	

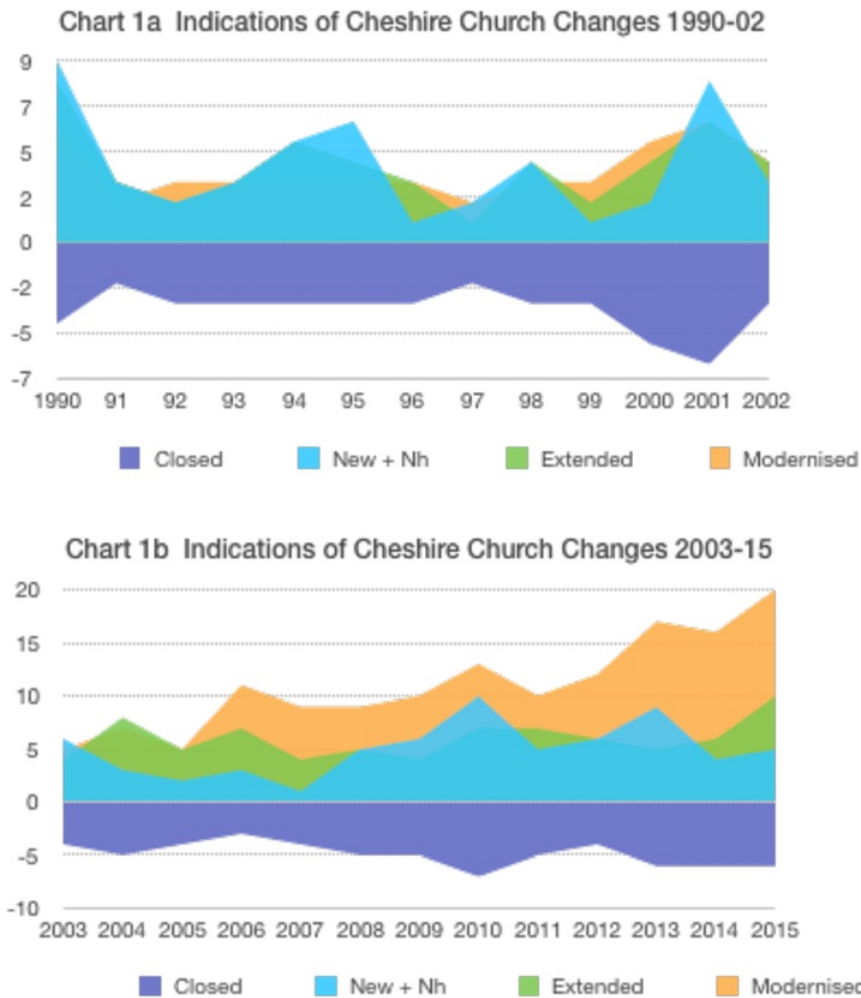
-	-	-	-	Hanforth M	
-	-	-	-	Macclesfield URC	
-	-	-	-	RCCG Heritage W	
-	-	-	-	St Bart. Wilmslow	
-	-	-	-	St John Knutsford	
-	-	-	-	St John Widnes	
-	-	-	-	St Mark Runcorn	
-	-	-	-	St Mary Weaverham	
-	-	-	-	Willaston M	
-	-	-	-	WEGM Warr	6 0 4 6 17
2015	North St Crewe	-	Lifechurch Lymm	Broomhall & Sound	All Saints Thelwall
	People's Orford	-	Lifechurch West	Christ Ch N'wich	Christ Ch Northwich
	Our Lady Widnes	Kingdom Runcorn		Kent Street IM W	Elworth M
	St Marie Widnes	Fresh Exp Crewe		Macclesfield URC	Hankelow M
	St Pius x Widnes	-	St Benedict Cz	Poole M	Jireh Warrington
	St Raphael Widnes	-		St Alban Tattenhall	Key Green M
	-	-	-	St Mary Acton	Latchford B Warr
	-	-	-	St Oswald Peover	Minshull UR
	-	-	-	St Peter Prestbury	New Life Cc Halebank
	-	-	-	Union St B Crewe	Padgate M Warr
	-	-	-		St Elizabeth Ashley
	-	-	-		St James Marton
	-	-	-		St Johnn Doddleston
	-	-	-		St Luke Holmes Chapel
	-	-	-		St Michael Runcorn
	-	-	-		St Michael Shotwick
	-	-	-		St Oswald Winwick
	-	-	-		St Peter Congleton
	-	-	-		St Thomas Stockton Heath
	-	-	-		Tarporley B & M
					6 2 3 10 20
Event Total in each Unitary Authority Area (W + H + CHE + CW&C)					
	27+15+32+31	16+8+21+15	27+3+13+15	35+8+45+37	54+20+80+48
<b>Total</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>202</b>

Source: Appendices A, B, and C..

Table 1a Indications of Cheshire Church Changes 1990-2002

Indicator	1990	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	2000	2001	2002
Closed	-4	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-2	-2	-3	-5	-6	-3
New + Nh	9	2	2	3	5	6	1	2	4	1	2	10	3
Extended	8	3	2	3	5	4	3	1	4	2	4	4	4
Modernised	6	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	3	5	6	4

Source: Table 1.



Viewed together, Charts 1a and 1b (which are derived from Table 1), illustrate the

Table 1b Indications of Cheshire Church Changes 2003-2015

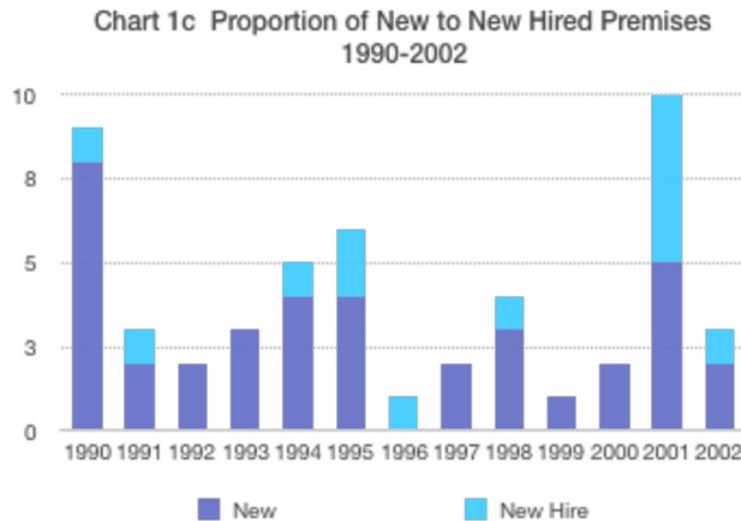
Indicator	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Closed	-4	-4	-4	-3	-4	-5	-5	-7	-5	-4	-6	-6	-6
New + Nh	6	3	2	3	1	5	6	10	5	6	9	4	5
Extended	4	8	5	8	5	5	4	7	6	6	5	6	10
Modernised	5	8	5	11	11	9	10	14	12	13	18	17	20

Source: Table 1.

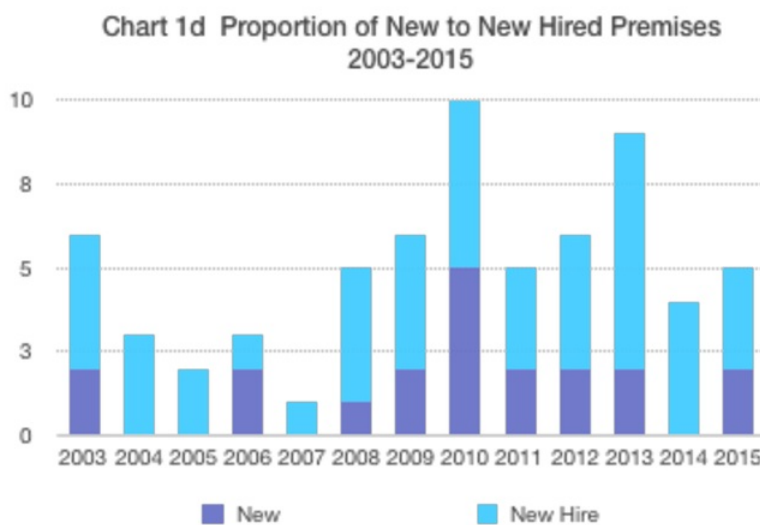
incidence and profile of church closures, openings of new churches or hiring of public venues for worship, building of extensions to existing church buildings, and modernizing to meet new missional needs, from January 1990 to December 2015. During the 1990's, most changes were just as likely to be losses or gains of new churches, as extensions or modernization. Gains marginally exceeded the losses which were fairly evenly spread across the county. As well as the peaks of activity in terms of openings and closures, which coincide with the beginning and end of each decade, especially the millennium, immediately prior to and following the 2007-08 economic crisis, there is evidence of a significant shift in churches' financial strategic decision-making. This is apparent in the increasingly greater proportion of churches choosing to extend or modernize existing buildings rather than close old, or build new ones, due to financial constraints.

There is also evidence of a second, more significant, emergent trend in churches' financial strategic decision-making, in the growing proportion of new churches which hire public venues for worship instead of seeking their own dedicated building, thus allowing them the freedom to upsize for growth, or adapt more readily to changing circumstances, such as meeting the evolving needs of community projects. Charts

1c and 1d indicate that from 2001, a marked contrast in the relative proportion of churches' use of public buildings occurred, than had been the case in the 1990's.



Source: Table 1.



Source: Table 1.



Table 3 Denominational Analysis of New Churches in Cheshire 1990-201

DENOMINATION	HALTON	CH EAST	CW&C	WARRINGTON	Σ New	%
Adventist				1	1	
Baptist		2	1		3	
Brethren		2			2	
Ch of England		1	4	3	8	8
Chr Fellowship				2	2	
Ecumenical P's	2	1	3	1	7	
Greek Othodox		1			1	
Independent	1		1	2	4	
J Witnesses	1	1	1	3	6	
Latter Day S's	1	1		1	3	
Latvian Ev L				1	1	
Methodist		7	3	2	12	11
Non Denom'l	2	4	6	6	18	16
Pentecostal	3	13	8	15	39	34
Presbyterian				1	1	
R Catholic	1		1	4	# 6	
Salvation Army			2		2	
URC				1	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100</b>

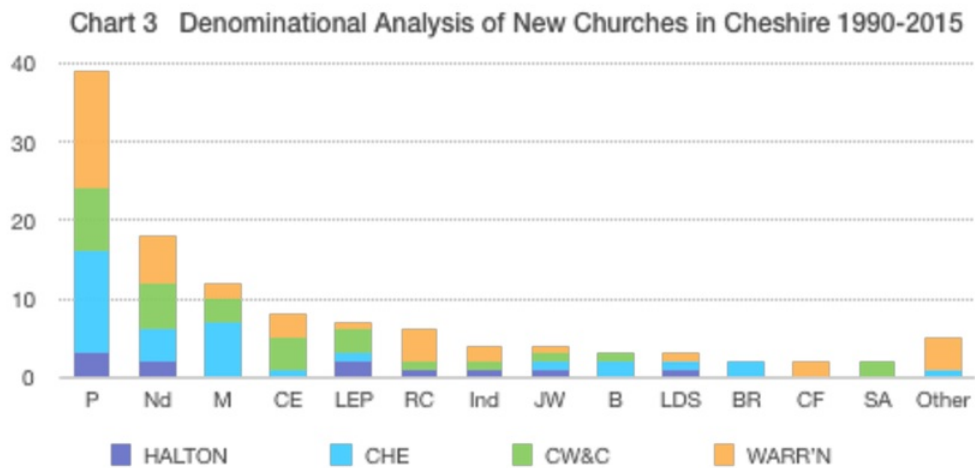
# Includes Polish language masses for immigrant communities in RC church buildings

Source: Appendix B.

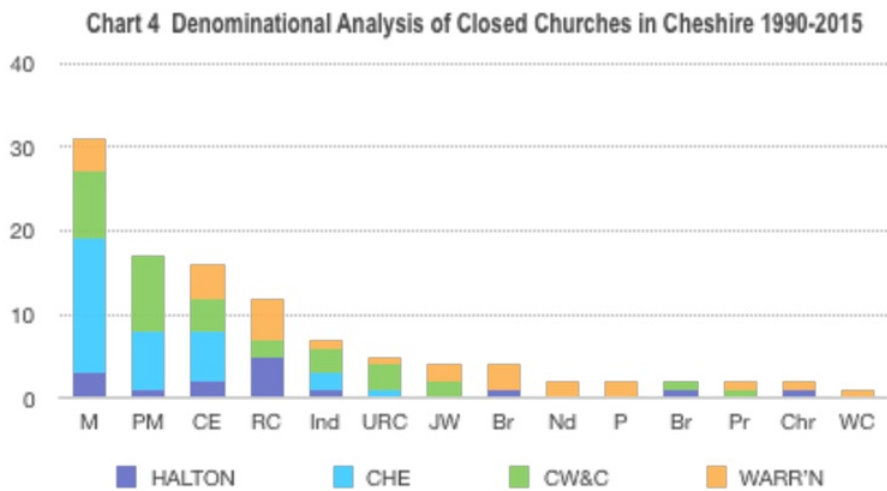
Table 4 Denominational Analysis of Churches Closed in Cheshire 1990-2015

DENOMINATION	HALTON	CH EAST	CW&C	WARRINGTON	Σ Closed	%
Baptist				1	1	
Brethren	1			3	4	
Christadelphian			1	1	2	
Ch of England	2	6	4	4	16	15
Independent	1	2	3	1	7	
J Witnesses				2	2	
Methodist +WM	3	16	8	4	31	29
Non Denom'l				2	2	
Pentecostal				2	2	
Primitive M	1	7	9		17	16
Presbyterian	1		1		2	
R Catholic	5		2	5	12	11
URC		1	3	1	5	
Welsh Calv.	1			1	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Appendix C.



Source: Table 3.



Source: Table 4.

Charts 3 and 4, which are derived from Tables 3 and 4, show the proportion of new churches being opened and planted by the newer, free denominations, relative to the trend among the older institutional denominations. The profile demonstrated by Chart 3, is virtually a reversal of the incidence of closure findings set out in Chart 4, while the expansion of ethnic churches found by Brierley (2006, 10) was, in Cheshire, represented by 1 Slovak/Czech, 1 Latvian, 2 Orthodox, and 5 Polish congregations.



Table 5 Churches Opened &amp; Closed by Denomination in Cheshire 1990-2015

	CE	B	Ind	M	CF+ Ev	P	Pr	Others
Opened	+8	+3	+4	+14	+2	+41	+1	+47
Closed	-16	-1	-7	-46	0	-2	-2	-29
Net Diff	-8	+2	-3	-34	+2	+39	-1	-18

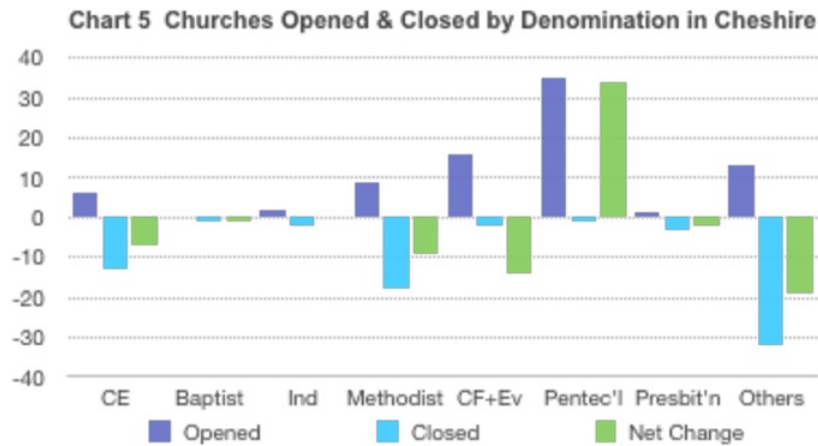
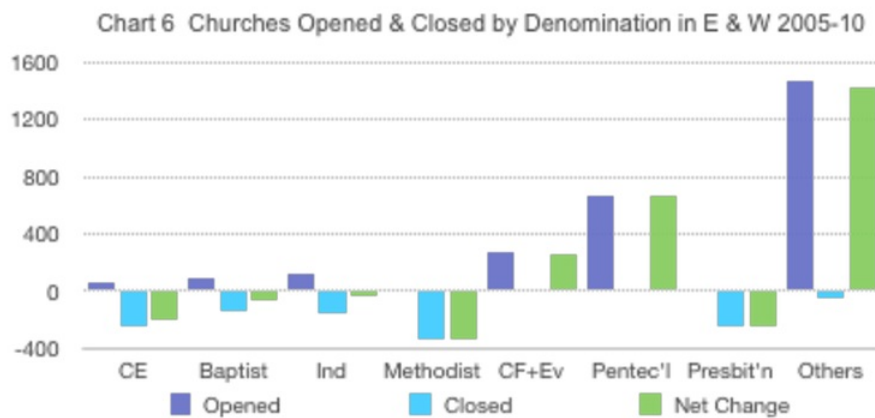


Table 6 Churches Opened &amp; Closed by Denomination in England &amp; W 2005-2010

	CE	B	Ind	M	CF+Ev	P	Pr	Other
Opened	+54	+84	+118	+6	+267	+668	+5	+1460
Closed	-238	-143	-154	-337	-17	-4	-248	-43
Net Diff	-204	-63	-36	-332	+250	+664	-243	+1417

Source: Evangelical Alliance [www.eauk.org/church/research-and-statistics/10/05/2014](http://www.eauk.org/church/research-and-statistics/10/05/2014)

Taken from Brierley (2014). *UK Church Statistics 2, 2010-2020*.



Notwithstanding the longer timescale of the Cheshire survey, it was confirmatory - from a standpoint of Cheshire results potentially representing trends in other areas - that a comparison of the distribution of church openings and closures found in the survey, with the national situation (Tables 5 and 6), would indicate a broadly similar pattern. Notably that Methodists had suffered more losses than other denominations while Pentecostals had opened more churches. The main difference was within the 'Others' category, which in the case of Cheshire churches included 12 Catholic, 5 URC, and 3 Brethren closures, a negative outcome, while the national result had in contrast, been positively influenced by an increase in New and Orthodox churches.

Table 5 shows the number of Cheshire churches opened and closed 1990-2015 by the denomination groupings used by Brierley - to aid comparison with the national trend (Table 6). Table 7 shows the estimated number of churches in England and Wales from 1979 to 2005 according to Brierley (2006, 10). In his more recent analysis, Brierley (2014) put the 2008 total number of churches at 49,727, the 2013 and 2014 totals at 50,660 and 50,709 respectively, from which a total of 50,748 was estimated for 2015, therefore the Cheshire churches total of 680 churches in 2015 represents approximately 1.3 per cent of the national total.

Table 7 Number of Churches 1979-2005 by Denomination [in England and Wales]

	CE	B	RC	Ind	M	NEW	Gk O	P	URC	Other	Total
1979	16960	2211	3673	3011	7636	419	97	1772	1829	1456	39064
1989	16373	2339	3824	3097	6740	1026	114	1951	1681	1462	38607
opened	+120	+105	+65	+53	+70	+90	+144	+355	+28	+437	+1867
closed	-212	-31	-118	-907	-570	-127	0	-201	-145	-446	-2757
1998	16281	2413	3771	2243	6240	1389	258	2105	1564	1453	37717
opened	+89	+58	+11	+247	+23	+89	+65	+207	+18	+276	+1083
closed	-123	-85	-126	-209	-264	-171	-6	-85	-112	-118	-1299
2005	16247	2386	3656	2281	5999	1307	317	2227	1470	1611	37501

Source: Brierley (2006, 10).

Unlike the outcome from the survey of Cheshire Churches (Table 1), Table 7 shows that while the number of new churches opening in England & Wales is increasing in some denominations, overall, the number of closures is still marginally higher. Table 7 also indicates that the number and rate at which churches closed over the 7 years 1998-2005 (31 per year average), was significantly less than that in the previous 9 years, during which the average rate of closure was 98 churches per year average.

It was a strange irony that during the survey, the writer's own church, St Mark's CE, Dallam, was closed - not through dwindling attendances or lack of use of the facilities by the community, but on economic grounds, upon the retirement of the incumbent. Unsurprisingly, the remnant did not merge with the nearest (high) CE church as the Diocese possibly surmised, but joined URC, Pentecostal or Salvation Army churches instead. So a fully functioning church with a faithful PCC and a licensed reader was lost, contrary to the Church of England website ([www.achurchnear you.com](http://www.achurchnearyou.com)) slogan, 'A Christian presence in every community.' Thus, as well as the reasons for closure listed earlier, this 'situation' may be illustrative of another common cause of closure. And it imposed the experience of loss and distress (cf. Macdonald, 2004, 105; p. 39) on our members, that members of other closed churches (Appendix C) must have suffered when their place of worship ceased exist as the hub of a faith community.

The St Mark's building was eventually taken over by a new Pentecostal church and renamed, 'St Mark's Oasis.' In contrast, inexplicably (other than being located in a different diocese), the reverse occurred a year earlier at rural St Paul's CE Church, Over Tabley. Despite low attendances, oversight was offered to another deanery minister 'to avoid closure' ([knutsfordguardian.co.uk/news/10177841-9](http://knutsfordguardian.co.uk/news/10177841-9) Dec 2014).

## SECTION 4 CONCLUSIONS

Notwithstanding the enormity of the task, the survey of places of worship within the ceremonial County of Cheshire boundary was completed with a satisfactory level of precision in approximately two and a half years.

Contrary to the ongoing (though reducing) decline of institutional church attendances in England, but in keeping with growing Pentecostalism (Brierley 2006, 25-6, 31), the evidence from the survey implied a relatively stable situation in Cheshire, with a net gain of 13 churches (1.9%) in 25 years. This suggests that similar developments may have occurred in other counties too, if the findings, which appear to point to a minor resurgence (and resilience) of Christianity, have been replicated elsewhere. Even if the 1970's and 1980's New Town status benefitted new church building in Warrington (which could have had the opposite effect if denominations had been unwilling to form Local Ecumenical Partnerships), the flourishing state of 'Methodism' in South Cheshire in particular - a denomination which Brierley (2006, 30) noted was on the brink of being replaced by Pentecostalism as the third largest denomination - infers that these positive developments may indeed, be symptomatic of wider trends.

The new *hidden* churches, which increasingly use public buildings for worship, could account for some of the disparity between census affirmations of faith, and church attendance statistics drawn from *Social Trends* ([www.ons.gov.uk/2011-10/02/2017](http://www.ons.gov.uk/2011-10/02/2017)), or Brierley (2006). The development of, and increasing number of 'hidden' churches casts considerable doubt on the current validity of Davie's (1994) 'Believing without belonging' proposition. Clearly, 'belonging' is important to many Christians. Moreover the advent of these relatively new churches also casts doubt on the completeness of



attendance statistics. The movement of former Church of England, Methodist, URC, and Baptist churchgoers to charismatic churches, supports the statistical indications of a shift from traditional to Pentecostal churches (christian-research.org.uk-29 Nov 2006), constituting what could be a form of *competitive religious market*.

Although the declines in allegiance to traditional denominations, matched by service attendance growth in new churches, could be seen as an outcome of an increasing 'mobility' of believers between churches (in which case there would be no loss of believers overall), this is not generally true across the age spectrum. While some older people do move to more lively Pentecostal and independent churches, these churches typically tend to attract mainly younger indigenous and immigrant families. Therefore, given the large numbers gained from the expansion of black and ethnic churches nationally, and growth of white churches from Alpha courses, evangelism, and Fresh Expressions noted by Brierley (2006, 12), there should be more believers overall. However, this is not the case because this growth has been insufficient to compensate for the annual loss of 'deceased' churchgoers. And while the gap may have narrowed in the intervening period, according to Brierley (2006, 209), 'twice as many die every year as are converted through courses' or other sources of growth.

There was considerable evidence throughout Cheshire of Ecumenical Partnerships, 'shared' buildings, and of 'hired' venues, especially in Warrington where there was a modest increase in churches. These positive developments were augmented by the scale of extension-building and modernization across Cheshire as a whole (Tables 1, 2, 3, and Charts 1a and b), which indicated how many churches had had sufficient 'confidence' to invest in facilities - for worship, outreach, or social justice projects.

Notwithstanding the logical reasons for using the chosen *indicators of change* (pp. 7-9), some small churches (in terms of number of members), were found to have modernized *prospectively*, presuming (optimistically) that 'newcomers' would be more likely to return to a more attractive building and thus augment the elderly membership. Similarly, despite criticism of the suspect validity of church attendance statistics, the use of *places used for worship* as an alternative indicator of change (pp. 8-9), was not, in the end, as straightforward to apply as envisaged, due to the complexity found, and resultant categorization *possibilities* for churches which had overlapping or anomalous characteristics. The problem was resolved by identifying the principle defining factors and noting the category into which each was placed, in order that alternative options could be applied retrospectively if necessary.

Although population growth may have enhanced developments in Warrington, it was unlikely to have been the case in other boroughs (Halton grew only 0.6 per cent from 1991 to 2011). So the marginal net increase in churches (Table 3 & 4) demonstrated that within the time frame, the hypothesis of the investigation was substantiated, in the sense that over 25 years, overall, Christianity in Cheshire has been relatively stable, with new growth developments showing modest promise for the future.

Despite the fact that writers such as Bruce (2002) and Partridge (2004) claimed that even in places where pockets of resistance to secularism do occur, they are unlikely to survive for long, the positive developments identified in the survey, over a period of 25 years, offer a fair challenge to these assertions. Indeed the evidence from the survey shows that in Cheshire at least, little ground has been lost overall, and that some localized resurgence has genuinely occurred, which has not only *not* been



short-lived (pace Bruce 2002), it appears potentially able to continue growing and adapting. Thus the results justify the concept in which the investigation was rooted. But, in common with other empirical research findings which focus on a particular aspect of an ever-changing society, the validity of the findings is time limited. What can be ventured though - in terms of Beckford's (2003, 71) 'social constructionist' conception of the cultural dynamic process of an oscillation between 'secularising' and 'sacralizing' tendencies - is that the findings can be regarded as an instance of modest movement in a sacralizing direction, given the social reconnections formed through (for example) church-run food banks, 'tea and toast,' and CAP services, for people experiencing food poverty, homelessness, and debt problems.

The integration of a wide range of ethnic immigrant families and individuals into Cheshire church congregations, illustrated a phenomenon which Bruce (2003, 258) regarded as a 'secularisation retarding' process which can occur during a *cultural transition*. So when the social identity of an immigrant is threatened by U.K cultural pressures, church attendance can ease the tension between the homeland and the new UK identity by engendering a sense of self-worth linked to the homeland. As a Chinese lady put it at her baptism, "Here I have found the long forgetting feeling of home." Immigrants find that fellow Christians share their values, and hold similar, albeit culturally distinct, social events. In these cases, Bruce (2003, 258) conceded that some immigrants may become (temporarily) more fervent than they had been previously. This did appear to be true for a range of immigrants observed in Church of England, Baptist, Pentecostal, RCGG, and URC church services attended. Indeed 'integration' worked in reverse in the sense that churches made up entirely of one

ethnic community (e.g. Latvian), were equally welcoming to English visitors. Such behaviour attests to the theological spiritual unity within the church, which according to Hughes' (1998, 83), can (and does) transcend nationality, colour, gender, and social or economic status.

As churches have adapted to survive, traditional service customs have changed from the use of traditional hymn books to 'screened' worship songs; from organ musical accompaniment to more lively guitar, drums and keyboard led music; from fixed hard pews to moveable, comfortable seating; from formally frocked ministers to suited pastors, and from clerical patronization of ordinary church members, to all sharing in ministry and mission, whether male or female, and irrespective of colour, or race, or disability. Gradually the church has mutated to survive, and must continue to do so ever more sensitively, to remain relevant in a rapidly changing, secular world.

The current climate of terrorist threats around the world, can be seen as being more advantageous to religion than to secularism in at least one sense. According to Bruce (2003, 259), when community culture, identity, or sense of self-worth are threatened by religious extremism or actual terrorist attacks happen, inhibition of secularism and secularisation will occur. Hence opportunities for interfaith dialogue may open up. So in the wake of the 1993 IRA bombing in Warrington, instead of creating mistrust, the event had the effect of uniting all faiths against the common enemy, giving religion a higher profile role and a stronger voice in society. The Christian, Jewish, Sikh, and Muslim leaders responded in similar unity to the 22nd March 2017 terrorist attack in London, as did the people of Manchester in showing 'solidarity' following the 23 May 2017 Ariana Grande Concert bomb atrocity. What they shared, as a city community,

as Mancunians, was palpably greater than their ethnic or religious differences.

For Bruce, the *cultural defense* effect elevates religion's influence in protecting group identity. As such, it offers a broad sociological explanation for the post 9/11/2001 surge in all survey indicators of growth demonstrated by the progressively increasing number of church building modernizations (Table 1; Chart 1a and 1b). But was it just 9/11/2001 that aided religious growth? allowing Christianity to make further progress in 'Pulling out of the Nose Dive' (Brierley 2006).

In her analysis of what constituted the *turning point* which, 'put religion back on the agenda,' Woodhead concluded that it was not just '9/11 and subsequent atrocities in the name of Islam,' or the increasing impact of mass immigration, but more credibly, that it was only when 'the sheer weight of [this] accumulating counter-evidence' was 'combined with pressures external to religion that something changed' (Woodhead and Catto 2012, 8-9).

From an international point of view, the religious climate has changed so much over the past decade since the study was conceived, that to some extent it has been overtaken by the far-reaching influence of world crises - far beyond that of the 2008 economic crisis (which was intended to be a point of reference). In view of these world crises, it seems to matter rather less now than it did, that the views of social theorists who claim that the influence of UK religious institutions is being reasserted - evident in challenges to the state by religious leaders as well as in the positive trends revealed by the empirical evidence from the survey (e.g. the extent to which a wide cross section of churches are becoming more involved in local communities in both

practical and religious ways). A recent instance being the use of the local Tabernacle Church for storage and distribution of clothes for victims of the Grenfell Tower fire. It was as one lady helper described it, “Christianity with its sleeves rolled up.” While such phenomena may have had a relatively small ‘slowing down’ effect on the momentum of secularism; objective conclusions about the status of religious resurgence are problematic, while war, persecution, and the refugee crisis are still exerting an extensive influence. Even so, encouraging positive changes were found. Whereas many disbanded churches were based in old rural chapels, new thriving churches now have new buildings, or hired community or school facilities, so an increasing proportion of premises used for worship today are either relatively new or have been revitalized by extending or modernizing, as indicated by Table 1. This suggests the probability of fewer dedicated building closures (and loss of churches) in future, on unsafe, or uneconomic building grounds.

The critical, influential issues revealed by the survey in Cheshire (i.e. the ‘relocation’ of churches, ‘movement’ of believers, church unity, ‘hiring’ or ‘sharing’ of premises, Local Ecumenical Partnerships, integration of Christian migrants, modernization of church buildings, updating of service customs and practice, the evolving role of ‘all believers’ in social reconnection, and food poverty), as well as worldwide famine, religious intolerance, mass migration, and religious extremism; not only add to the complexity of change in different ways and in varying degree as they interact, they also collectively illustrate the far reaching nature and influence of religion in society. And in the case of Christianity, belatedly becoming more flexible and relevant than hitherto.

Jim Wallis (2006, 345-6), the co-founder of 'Sojourners', declared that the answer to bad or even dangerous religion in the struggle between belief and secularism, is not secularism, but *better religion* - meaning, a 'prophetic faith' which does not see the primary rivalry of our time as being between religion and secularism, but rather as a fundamental (spiritual) choice between cynicism and hope. Hope, that is, for social justice, peace, and responsible 'environmental stewardship' for the *common good*.



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## APPENDIX A

## ACTIVE CHESHIRE CHURCHES' PLACES OF WORSHIP 2015

Acton St Mary* Monks Lane	CE	†	E15	126	stmarysacton.com
Acton Bridge Milton Rough Baptist	B	✓		145	joinmychurch.org
Acton Bridge Methodist Chapel Lane	M	✓			northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
Adlington St John's Brookledge Ln (Tin)	CE	✓		80	stpetersprestbury.org
ALDERLEY EDGE AA map ref: 78	-	-			aeandkcircuit.com
St Philip* Church Lane	CE	✓			stphilipandstjames.co
St Pius X Stamford Rd	RC	✓			dioceseofshrewsbury.org
Alderley Edge Methodist Chapel Rd	M	✓	M95		alderleyedgemethodistchurch
Aldford St John the Baptist Church Ln	CE	✓		185	stpeterswaverton.org
Allgreave - see Appendix C (1999)	-	-		183	
ALSAGER AA map ref: 131-2	-	-			christchurch-alsager.org.uk/cta
Alsager CC & Café Crewe Rd	AOG P	N90	✓	M14	alsagercc.co.uk
Alsager URC Brookhouse Rd	URC	✓		M11~	alsagerurc.org.uk
Christ Church, Church Rd	CE	✓			christchurch-alsager.org
Hassall Road Methodist & Bookshop	M	N12	✓		cheshiresouth.org.uk
Linley Adventist Mission Linley Wayside	Adv	✓			adventistchurches.org
St Mary Magdalene Crewe Rd	CE	✓		M02/08/12	stmarysalsager.co
St Gabriel Lawton Rd	RC	✓		M90/10	stgabrielsalsager.org
Wesley Place Methodist Lawton Rd	M	✓		M14	wesley-place.org.uk
Alvanley St John the Evangelist Manley Rd	CE	✓		151	achurchnearyou.com
Antrobus St Mark Knutsford Rd	CE	✓		M15 154	achurchnearyou.com
Antrobus Methodist Barber's Lane	M	✓			sankeyvalleymethodists.org
Appleton Thorn - see Warrington	-	-		146	
Arley Hall St Mary Chapel Arley Rd	CE	†		147	greatbudworthchurch.org
Ashley St Elizabeth Ashley Road	CE	†	E14 M15		stelizabethsashleyorg
Ashton Hayes St John Evang Church Rd	CE	✓		160	ashtonhayesbtck.co
Astbury St Mary* Newbold Astbury Congleton	CE	✓	E14	124	astburychurch.org
Aston by Sutton St Peter Aston Lane	CE	✓		144	achurchnearyou.com
Aston by Wrenbury St Andrew Wrenbury Rd	M	N87	✓	M91	208 cheshiresouth.org
Aston juxta Mondrum - see Worleston	-	-		127	
Audlem St James the Great	CE	✓	E09 M93/09		stjamesaudlem.org
Audlem Baptist Woore Rd nr Crewe	B	✓		M06	audlembaptistchurch.org
Audlem Methodist Shropshire St	M	✓	E98 M06		4audlemmethodistchurch



Backford St Oswald Church Lane	CE	✓	E12 M12 stoswaldschurchbackford
Backford Greater Grace Ev Church Ln	Nd	✓	greatergrace4chester.wix.com
Baddiley St Michael (see Ravensmoor)	CE	✓	208 wrenburychurch.org
Barbridge Methodist Mill Pool Lane	M	✓	189 cheshiresouth.org
Barthomley St Bertoline Radway Green Rd	CE	✓	M13 barthomleystbertolines.org
Bartington Methodist Chapel Lane	M	✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
Bickerton Holy Trinity Goldford Ln	CE	✓	201 malpasschurch.co
Bickley Moss St Wenefredes Bickley Lane	CE	✓	207 # stwenefredesbickley.org
Birtles St Catherine* Birtles Lane	CE	✓	stcatherinebirtles.org
Blakenhall - see Appendix C (2007)~	-	-	210
Bollington Life Church Hawthorn Rd	P N94	✓	bollington.org.uk
Bollington St Oswald Bollington Rd	CE	✓	# stoswaldbollington.org
Bollington St Gregory Wellington Rd	RC	✓	stgregory.bollington.co
Bollington & Macclesfield URC Church St	URC	✓	macclesfieldurc.fsnet.co
Bosley St Mary the Virgin A523	CE	✓	182 bosleyvillage.org.uk
Bosley Methodist Tunstall Rd	M	✓	E14 M85 # danetrentmethodist.org
Bradfield Green - see Leighton cum Minshull -	-	✓	191 stpeterslcmv.org.uk
Bradley Green Ind Congregational Chapel Ln	Ind	✓	206 no website
Bradshaw Brook M Middlewich Rd Allostock M	M	✓	164 # danetrentmethodist.org
Bradwall Green - see App.C (2013)	-	-	178
Brereton Green St Oswald Newcastle Rd	CE	✓	M98 179 mybrereton.com
Bridgemere - see Appendix C (2007)	-	-	210
Brookhouse Green Methodist Pitcher Ln	M	✓	M11~ 194 # danetrentmethodist
Broomhall & Sound Methodist Newtown Rd	M	✓	E15 209 cheshiresouth.org.uk
Brown Knowl Methodist Sherrington Ln	M	✓	E90 201 brownknowlmethodist
Bruera St Mary Chapel Lane	CE	✓	E90 185stpeterswaverton.org
Buerton - see Appendix C (1999)	-	-	210
Buglawton - see Congleton	-	-	124
Bulkeley - see Appendix C (2011)	-	-	201
Bunbury St Boniface* Bowe's Gate Rd	CE	✓	188 stbonifacebunbury.org
Bunbury Trinity M Hurst Cl Bunbury Ln	M N88	✓	bunburytivertonmethodist.org
Burleydam St Mary & St Michael 214	CE	✓	E97 M04 wrenburychurch.org
Burton St Nicholas The Village nr Neston	CE	✓	158 burtonchurch.org.
Burwardsley St John the Divine School Ln	CE	✓	187 achurchnearyou.com
Byley St John Ev Moss Lane Middlewich	CE	✓	119 achurchnearyou.com

Calveley Chapel Calveley Hall Lane	CE	✓		achurchnearyou.com
Capenhurst Holy Trinity Capenhurst Rd	CE	✓		achurchnearyou.com
Capesthorne Hall Chapel Holy Trinity private	CE	x		achurchnearyou.com
Chelford St John the Evangelist 166	CE	✓		chelfordwithlowerwithingtonchurches
CHESTER AA map ref: 2, 101-5, 107-9	-	-		
Caldy Valley EP CV Rd Boughton foodbank M/URC	N84	✓	E94/98	caldyvalleychurch.org
Chester Cathedral Abbey Square	CE	†		chestercathedral.com
Christ Church Gloucester St	CE	✓		ccnewtown.wordpress.com
Christadelphian Hall 31A Egerton St	Chr	✓	M85	chesterchristadelphians.org
Christ Embassy 2,7 Knutsford Way	P	✓		christembassychester.org
Christian Science St Olave St	CSc	✓		christiansciencechurchchester.org
Christian Family Five Ashes Rd C Centre	Nd	Nh08✓		cfccheshire.co.uk
City Church Music Theatre Tarvin Rd	P	Nh12✓		citychurchchester.co.uk
City Road Presbyterian	Pr	✓		presbyterianchurchchester
Community Church Melbourne Rd Blacon	Nd	✓		tccchester.org
Ebenezer B Chapel Francis/Crewe St	B	✓	E12 M08	ebenezerbaptistchester.org
Festival Christian Centre Queen St AOG	P	N76 ✓		festivalchurch.com
Freedom Chester City Mission Hunter St	P	Nh12✓		newfrontierscheester.org
Holy Trinity Norris Rd Blacon	CE	✓		holyltrinityblacon.org
Hoole All Saints Hoole Rd foodbank	CE	✓	E02	allsaintshoole.org
Hoole Lighthouse Centre Westminster Rd	B	✓	E00 M03	hbc.org.uk
Hoole Baptist City Mission Hunter St	B	Nh03✓		hbc.org.uk
Hoole Methodist Hamilton Street	M	✓		hoolemethodistchurch.org
Hoole URC Hoole Road	URC	✓		hooleurc.org.uk
Kingdom Hall Melbourne Rd Blacon	JW	N69 ✓		no website
Kingdom Hall Boundary Rd Saltney	JW	N90 ✓		no website
Kingsway Chapel & Café Kingsway Newton	Br	✓		kingswaychapel.org.uk
Matthew Henry Ev Sports Club Plas Newton Ln	U	N88 ✓		chesterunitarians.org
New Church Dicksons Drive Newton	Nd	✓		generalconference.org
Northgate Upper Northgate St	CE	✓	M13	northgate.org.uk
Presbyterian Ch of Wales St John St	Pr	✓	M90	ebcpcw.org.uk
Quaker Meeting House Frodsham St foodbank	Q	✓	M14	wirralcheesterquakets.org
Salvation Army St Anne St	SA	✓	M05/13	salvationarmy.org
St Andrew Newgate Rd Handbridge	URC	✓		chester-churches.co.uk
St Barbara GkO Overleigh Rd Handbridge	GkO	N87 ✓		stbarbara.org.uk



St Clare Downsfield Rd Lache [Latin]	RC	✓		stclareschester.org.uk
St Columba Plas Newton Ln Newton	RC	N65	✓	stcolumbachester.com
St Francis of Assisi Grosvenor St	RC	✓		stfranciscatholicchurchchester.co.uk
and Polish Community Mass	PC	Nh14	✓	weekdaymasses.org.uk/
St John the Baptist Vicars Lane*	CE	✓		parishofchester.com
St Luke Chester Rd Huntington	CE	N89	✓	stlukeschester.org.uk
St Mark Lache c Saltney St Marks Rd CAP	CE	✓	E94	stmarkssaltney.org.uk
St Mary Overleigh Rd Handbridge	CE	✓		stmaryschester.co.uk
St Michael [Kingsway Café] Devon Rd Newton	CE	✓	E91/03 EP	stmichaelschester.com
St Oswald & Thomas Parkgate Rd	CE	✓	M13	stthomaschester.org
St Paul Sandy Lane Boughton	CE	✓		stpaulschester.org.uk
St Peter Ecum'l Centre & Café The Cross	CE	✓		parishofchester.com
St Theresa Blacon Ave Blacon	RC	✓		sttheresablacon.wordpress.com
St Werburg RC Grosvenor Park Rd	RC	✓	M02	stwerburghchester.co
The Uniting Church Garden Ln foodbank	M/URC	N11	✓	chesteranddelamereforest.org
University Chapel Cheyney Road	CE	✓	M14	chester.ac.uk
Upton Baptist (Ind) Flag Lane	B	N87	✓	ubc.org.uk
Upton Holy Ascension Church Lane	CE	✓		uptonha.co.uk
Upton URC 44 Heath Road	URC	✓	M03	uptonurc.org.uk
URC 121 Saughall Rd Blacon	URC	✓		chester-churches.co.uk
Vineyard 53 Crowne Plaza Trinity St	P	Nh13	✓	vineyard53.org
Wesley M Centre Café St John St foodbank	WM	✓	E09 M09	wesleychester.co.uk
Zion Tabernacle Evangelical Union St	Nd?	✓		chester-churches.co.uk
Cholmondeley Castle St Nicholas Chapel	CE	-		cholmondeleycastle.com
Chorlton [Shavington] M Chorlton Ln	M	✓		137 cheshiresouth.org.uk
Christleton St James Pepper St	CE	✓	M05 105	christleton.org.uk
Christleton Methodist Little Heath Rd	M	✓	E90/11	chesteranddelamereforest
Church Lawton All Saints Church Ln off A50	CE	✓		132 allsaintschurchlawton.co
Church Minshull St Bartholomew Cross Ln	CE	✓	M02/12	stbartschurchminshull
Churton - see Appendix C (1993)	-	✓	185	
Clive Green - see Appendix C (2013)	-	-	122	see Trinity M Winsford
Coddington St Mary Aldersey Lane	CE	✓	185	stmaryschurchcoddington.org
Comberbach Methodist Senna Lane	M	✓	E07 M04/7	comberbach.com
CONGLETON AA map ref: 124-5	-	-		
Congleton Baptist St John Amb West Rd	B	~Nh05	✓	cbaptist.org.uk

Congleton URC Antrobus St	URC	✓		congleton.urc.org.uk
Cross Street Church & Café	P	✓	E04	crossstreetchurch.co.uk
Holy Trinity Leek/Biddulph Rd Mossley	CE	✓	M11	congletonteamparish.co
JCLDS Newcastle Rd CW12 4HL	LDS	N09 ✓		mormon.org.uk/
New Life Danesford cc West Rd foodbank	P	Nh02 ✓		nlchurch.org.uk
St James the Great West St	CE	✓		stjames-congleton.org
St John Ev Buxton Old Rd Buglawton	CE	✓		congletonteamparish.co
St Peter Chapel St	CE	✓	M15	congletonteamparish.co
St Stephen Brook St	CE	✓	M03	congletonteamparish.co
St Mary RC West Road	RC	✓		catholicdirectory.org
Rood Lane Methodist Derby St	M	✓		# danetrentmethodist.org.uk
Trinity Methodist Wagg St	M	N68 ✓		# danetrentmethodist.org.uk
Wellspring M Canal Rd/Kestrel Cl	M	N93 ✓		# danetrentmethodist.org.uk
Word of Life Scout Hut St John's Rd Bugl'n Nd	Nh13 ✓			wordoflifechurchcongleton.org
Congleton Edge - see App C (2007)	-	-		196
Cotebrook St John & Holy Cross Stable Ln	CE	✓	176	tarporleyparishchurch.org/
CREWE AA map ref: 128-9, 191-2	-	-		crewechurches.org.uk
All Saints & St Paul Stewart St	CE	N65 ✓		# allsaintscrewe.org.uk
Bethany Gospel Hall Lime Tree Ave	Br	✓		gospelhall.org.uk
Christadelphian Hall Edelston St	Chr	✓		ukchristadelphians.org
Christian Concern St Pauls C West St	Nd	✓	foodbank	christianconcern.org
Coppenhall Methodist Bradfield Rd	M	✓	M12	cheshiresouth.org.uk
and Crewe & Nantwich Quakers	Q	Nh12 ✓		quaker.org.uk/crewe
Fresh Expressions M & Café North St	M	N15 ✓		cheshiresouth.org.uk
Gospel Hall Heathfield Ave	Br	N01 ✓		heathfieldgospelhall.org
Gresty Rd Evangelical Gresty Green	Nd	✓		grestyroad.org.uk
Hope Evangelical Ruskin Sports College	P	Nh10 ✓	#	hopechurchcrewe.com
JCLDS A534 Crewe Rd Wistaston	LDS	✓		mormon.org.uk/
KHJW Greystone Park Hall o' Shaw St	JW	x		no website
New Life Community Ch Fuller Dr	P Elim	N98 ✓		newlifecentre.co.uk
New Testament Church of God Stewart St	P	N10 †	E95	newtcreweblogspot.com
Our Lady of Ostra Brama Polish Cc 71 West St	PC	✓		dioceseof shrewsbury.org
RCCG Hope Centre Georges Cc West St	P	Nh10 ✓		rccghopecentre.org
Restore 30 Oakhurst Dr Wistaston / Costa C	CE	N14 ✓		restorecrewe.co.uk
St Andrew w St John the Baptist Bedford St	CE	✓		crewechurches.org.uk

St Barnabus West St (no modernization here!)	CE	✓		crewechurches.org.uk
St Mark M Bramhall Rd <b>Wistaston Gr</b>	M	✓		<a href="#">foodbank</a> cheshiresouth.org.uk
St Mary Gatefield/St Mary St	RC	✓		stmarycrewe.org.uk
and <u>Polish Community Mass</u>	<b>PC</b>	✓		stmarycrewe.org.uk
St Mary Church Lane <b>Wistaston</b>	CE	✓	M06/08	stmarywistaston.org
St Michael Ford Lane <b>Coppenhall</b>	CE	†	E94 Hall	stmichaelscoppenhall.
St Peter Earle St Crewe	CE	✓	#	stpeterscrewe.org.uk
St Stephen Methodist Gainsborough Rd	M	✓		cheshiresouth.org.uk
Salvation Army Prince Albert St	SA	✓		salvationarmy.org.uk/
Union Street Baptist	B	✓	E14/15 M13	crewebaptist.co.uk
Wells Green M Brookland Ave <b>Wistaston</b>	M	✓		cheshiresouth.org.uk
West Street/Richard St CF	CF	✓	M90-	wscfchurch.com
<b>Crewe by Farndon</b> M Chapel Crewe Ln	M	✓		crewebyfarndonmethodistchapel.org
<b>Crewe Green</b> St Michael & All Angels	CE	✓	129	hcganglican.org
<b>Crowton</b> Christ Church Station Rd	CE	✓	153	nck.org.uk
<b>Cuddington</b> Methodist Mill Lane	M	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
Culcheth & Croft - see Warrington	-	-		25-6
<b>Danebridge</b> Methodist Westwood Rd	M	✓	183	<a href="#">no website</a>
<b>Daresbury</b> All Saints [ <b>Lewis Carroll C</b> ]	CE	✓	E11	daresburycfe.org.uk
<b>Davenham</b> St Wilfred Church St	CE	✓		davenhamparish.net
<b>Davenham</b> Methodist Firtfields	M	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
<b>Davenport</b> Methodist Chapel Rd A54	M	✓	E09 #	danetrentmethodist.org
<b>Delamere</b> St Peter off Chester Rd	CE	✓	162 #	delamerechurch.blogspot.co
<b>Disley</b> Baptist Buxton Rd	B	✓	168	disleybaptis.org.uk
<b>Disley</b> Methodist Buxton Rd	M	N08 ✓		mandsmethodists.org.uk
<b>Disley</b> Quaker M House Ring o Bells Ln	Q	✓	168	quaker.org.uk/disley
<b>Disley</b> St Mary the Virgin Red Lane	CE	✓	168	disleyparish.org
<b>Doddington</b> St John Evang't Hunsterson Rd	CE	✓	M15	stjohnsdoddington.org
<b>Dodleston</b> St Mary Church Croft	CE	✓	E04 107	achurchnearyou.com
<b>Duddon</b> St Peter Duddon Rd	CE	✓	M11 175	tarvinparish.com
<b>Dunham on the Hill</b> St Luke	CE	✓		dunhamhillstlukes.org
<b>Eaton</b> (Congleton) Christ Church Macc Rd	CE	✓	181	achurchnearyou.com
<b>Eaton</b> (Tarporley) St Thomas Royal Ln	CE	✓	176	tarporleyparishchurch.org
<b>Eccleston</b> St Mary the Virgin Church Rd	CE	✓	108	ecclestonstmary-chester.org
<b>ELLESMERE PORT</b> AA map ref: 6-7, 95, 98. 159	-	-		christianstogetherintheport.org.uk

Bethany Gospel Hall Flatt Lane	Br	N<89	✓	<a href="http://gospelhall.org.uk">gospelhall.org.uk</a>
KHJW Coronation Rd Whitby	JW	N<89	✓	<a href="#">no website</a>
Little Sutton Methodist Chester Rd	M		✓	<a href="http://ellesmereportmethodist.org.uk">ellesmereportmethodist.org.uk</a>
Christchurch Oasis Station Rd	Elim P	N10	✓	M10 <a href="#">no website</a>
Our Lady Star of the Sea Enfield Rd	RC		✓	<a href="http://rcchep.co.uk">rcchep.co.uk</a>
RCCG New Creation Centre 123 Station Rd	P	Nh13	✓	<a href="http://ncc-rccg.org/">ncc-rccg.org/</a>
St Bernard Sherbourne Rd Wolverham	RC	N77	✓	<a href="http://rcchep.co.uk">rcchep.co.uk</a>
St George URC Chester Rd Little Sutton	URC		✓	<a href="http://stgs-urc.co.uk">stgs-urc.co.uk</a>
St John Evangelist Old Chester Rd Gt Sutton	CE		✓	<a href="http://achurchnearyou.com">achurchnearyou.com</a>
St Paul Chester Rd Childer Thornton	CE		✓	<a href="http://achurchnearyou.com">achurchnearyou.com</a>
St Saviour Tarporley Rd Gt Sutton	RC	N59	✓	<a href="http://rcchep.co.uk">rcchep.co.uk</a>
St Thomas & All Saints Whitby Rd & <a href="#">Port Reach</a>	CE		✓	M94 <a href="http://ellesmereportparish.co">ellesmereportparish.co</a>
Salvation Army & Shop Whitby Rd	SA	N95	✓	<a href="http://salvationarmy.org.uk">salvationarmy.org.uk</a>
Trinity M & <a href="#">Café Whitby Rd</a> <a href="#">foodbank</a>	M	†		M06 <a href="http://ellesmereportmethodist">ellesmereportmethodist</a>
URC 104 Chester Rd Whitby	URC		✓	<a href="http://directory.urc.org.uk">directory.urc.org.uk</a>
Whitby Methodist Hope Farm Rd Gt Sutton	M		✓	<a href="http://ellesmereportmethodist.org">ellesmereportmethodist.org</a>
<a href="#">Elton Church Hall</a> 150	CE		✓	<a href="http://chester.anglican.org/churches.asp">chester.anglican.org/churches.asp</a>
<a href="#">Englesea-Brook M Chapel &amp; PM Museum</a>	M		✓	E12 <a href="http://engleseabrook-museum.org">engleseabrook-museum.org</a>
<a href="#">Elworth; Ettiley Heath - see Sandbach</a>	-	-		193
<a href="#">Farndon St Chad Church Lane</a>	CE		✓	E11~ <a href="http://stchadschurchfarndon.org">stchadschurchfarndon.org</a>
<a href="#">Farndon The Rock Chapel</a> Church St	URC		✓	<a href="http://directory.urc.org.uk">directory.urc.org.uk</a>
<a href="#">Forest Chapel St Stephen</a>	CE		✓	<a href="http://britainexpress.com">britainexpress.com</a>
<a href="#">Frandle Quaker M House Sandiway Lane</a>	Q		✓	<a href="http://quaker.org.uk/frandle">quaker.org.uk/frandle</a>
<a href="#">FRODSHAM</a> AA map ref: 151	-	-		<a href="http://frodshamchurchestogether.org.uk">frodshamchurchestogether.org.uk</a>
Frodsham Methodist (5 t's) Kingsley Rd	M	N90	✓	<a href="http://frodshammethodist.org">frodshammethodist.org</a>
Kings Woodhouses IM Chester Rd	IM	N95~	✓	<a href="http://kingschurchfrodsham.org.uk">kingschurchfrodsham.org.uk</a>
Main Sreet Community Church Ev	Nd		✓	E95 M95 <a href="http://mscch.org">mscch.org</a>
St Lawrence Church Rd	CE		✓	<a href="http://stlawrencefrodsham.org">stlawrencefrodsham.org</a>
St Luke 61 High Street	RC	N81	✓	<a href="http://stlukesparish.org.uk">stlukesparish.org.uk</a>
Peoples Ch Castle Park Arts Centre	Nd	N06~	✓	<a href="http://frodshampictures.co.uk">frodshampictures.co.uk</a>
Storehouse Costa Coffee 14 Church St	Nd	N11	✓	<a href="http://storehousechurch.org">storehousechurch.org</a>
<a href="#">Gawsworth St James Church Lane</a>	CE		✓	167 <a href="http://gawsworth.com/stjames">gawsworth.com/stjames</a>
<a href="#">Gawsworth/Warren Methodist A536</a>	M		✓	167 <a href="http://gawsworth.com/methodist">gawsworth.com/methodist</a>
<a href="#">Goostrey St Luke Church Bank</a>	CE		✓	164-5 <a href="http://stlukegoostrey.org.uk">stlukegoostrey.org.uk</a>
<a href="#">Goostrey Methodist</a> Main Rd	M		✓	E93 M94 <a href="http://danetrentmethodist.org">#danetrentmethodist.org</a>



Great Barrow	St Bartholomew Mill Ln	CE	✓	160	achurchnearyou.com
Great Budworth	St Mary & All Saints*	CE	†	M99	greatbudworthchurch.org
Great Warford	Baptist Merrymans Ln	B	✓		no website
Great Warford	KHJW	JW	✓		no website
Guildon Sutton	St John the Baptist	CE	✓	M01	plemstallandguildensuttonbh
Hale	St Mary Church Rd	CE	†		65widnesdeanery.org
Halebank	New Life Cc Hale Rd foodbank Elim P Nh01†			E03 M15	farnworthcf.org.uk
Handforth	St Benedict Hall Rd ecology	RC	✓		stbenedictshandforth.co
Handforth	St Chad Wilmslow Rd	CE	✓	E90 60	stchadshandforth.org
Handforth	St Mary Methodist Wilmslow Rd	M	✓	M13	stmaryhandforth.org
Handforth	Vinelif LG Pavilion Clough Ave	P Nh01/14	✓		vinelifewilmslow.com
Handley	All Saints Whitchurch Rd	CE	✓	186	handleyvillage.co.uk
Hankelow	Methodist nr Audlem	M	✓	M15 210	cheshiresouth.org
Hargrave	St Peter Church Lane	CE	✓	175	stpetershargrave.org
Hartford	St John the Baptist School Lane	CE	✓	E98/10	stjohnshartford.org.uk
Hartford	Methodist Beach Rd	M	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
Harthill	- see Appendix C (2003)	-	✓	187	
Haslington	Methodist Bradeley Rd	M	✓	E13	hmcmethodistchurch.org
Haslington	St Matthew Crewe Rd	CE	✓	130	hcganglican.org
Haslington	URC The Dingle	URC	✓	E90~ 130	no website
Hassal Green	St Philip [pink]	CE	✓		sandbachchurches.org
Hatchmere	- see Appendix C (2002)	-	✓	162	
Hatherton	Methodist Crewe Rd	M	✓	210	cheshiresouth.org
Helsby	St Paul Chester Rd	CE	✓	M06	stpaulhelsby.org.uk
Helsby	Methodist Chester Rd	M	✓	E06 M09	helsbymethodist.org
Henbury	St Thomas Church Ln	CE	✓	167	stthomashenbury.org
High Legh	St John The Ave	CE	✓	E93/10	stjohnshighleghegh.org
High Legh	St Mary Pheasant Walk (private)	Nd	✓	148	Lord & Lady Grey
Higher Wych	Methodist nr Malpas	M	✓	205	cheshiresouth.org.uk
Holmes Chapel	St Luke London Rd	CE	✓	178	holmeschapelchurch.com
Holmes Chapel	St Margaret Maccl'd Rd	RC	✓		stmarysparishmiddlewich.org
Holmes Chapel	Methodist Knutsford Rd	M	✓	E08 M08	#danetrentmethodist.org
Hooton	St Mary Chester Rd Ellsmere Port	RC	✓	94	rcchep.co.uk
Hulme Walfield	St Michael Giantswood Ln	CE	✓	180	breretonandrugeleyparish.co
Huxley	St Andrew Church Ln	CE	✓	175	chesteranddelamereforest.org

<b>Ince</b> St James Pool Lane <b>EP</b>	<b>CE/M</b>	✓	M13 99	achurchnearyou.com
<b>Kelsall</b> St Philip Chester Rd	<b>CE</b>	✓	161	kelsallparishchurch.org
<b>Kelsall</b> Methodist Chapel Bank	<b>M</b>	✓	M12	kelsallmethodistchurch.co
<b>Kettleshulme</b> Methodist Kishfield Lane	<b>M</b>	✓	E96 M96 170	wbup.org ?
<b>Key Green</b> Methodist Middle Ln	<b>M</b>	✓	M09/12/15 #	danetrentmethodist
<b>Kingsley</b> St John the Evangelist	<b>CE</b>	✓	152	nck.org.uk
<b>Kingsley</b> Blakelees Methodist Hollow Lane	<b>M</b>	†	M06/10	chesteranddelamereforest.org
<b>Kingsley</b> The Hurst Methodist	<b>M</b>	✓	E11 M09	kingsleymethodist.org
<b>KNUTSFORD</b> AA map ref: 157	-	-	-	-
St Cross Mobberley Rd	<b>CE</b>	✓	E80	stcrossknutsford.org.uk
St John the Baptist Church Hill	<b>CE</b>	†	E91 M14	stjohnsknutsford.org
St Vincent de Paul Tatton St	<b>RC</b>	1983 ✓		stvincentsknutsford.org
Methodist Chapel Princess St	<b>M</b>	†	E06 M06	kmc.org.uk
The Welcome Church/Café 146 Longridge	<b>M</b>	N95 ✓		thewelcome.org.uk
Unitarian Chapel Brook St Adams Hill	<b>U</b>	✓		brookstchapel.org
<b>Lach Dennis</b> All Saints Station Rd	<b>CE</b>	✓	115	achurchnearyou.com
<b>Langley</b> Methodist Main Rd nr Maccles	<b>M</b>	✓	85 #	langleymethodist.co
<b>Ledsham</b> Two Mills Pr Chapel Lane	<b>Pr</b>	✓	158	no website
<b>Leftwich</b> - see Appendix C (2006)	-	-	113	-
<b>Leighton cum Minshull</b> Vernon St Peter	<b>CE</b>	✓	E10 hall 191	stpeterslcmv.org
<b>Lightwood Green</b> Whitchurch Rd Audlem	<b>M</b>	✓	209	cheshiresouth.org
<b>Little Bollington</b> Holy Trinity Lymm Rd	<b>CE</b>	†	M11	rosternewwithbollington
<b>Little Budworth</b> St Peter Vicarage Ln	<b>CE</b>	✓	E13 177	stpeterslittlebudworth.co
<b>Little Budworth</b> Methodist Chester Rd	<b>M</b>	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
<b>Little Leigh</b> St Michael & All Angels	<b>CE</b>	✓		en.wikipedia.org/wiki/
<b>Little Leigh</b> Baptist Ash House Lane	<b>B</b>	✓	154	llbc.org.uk
<b>Lostock Gralam</b> St John Evangelist	<b>CE</b>	✓	114	achurchnearyou.com
<b>Lostock Green</b> Methodist Birches Lane	<b>M</b>	✓	114	northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
<b>Lower Peover</b> St Oswald* The Cobbles	<b>CE</b>	†	E15 164	peoverchurches.org.uk
<b>Lower Whitley</b> St Luke Street Lane	<b>CE</b>	✓	154	whitleyvillage.org.uk
<b>Lower Withington</b> St Peter Farm Ln	<b>CE</b>	✓		chelfordwithlowerwithingtonchurches
<b>Lower Withington</b> Methodist Farm Ln	<b>M</b>	✓	M10 165 #	danetrentmethodist.org
<b>Lower Wych</b> - see Appendix C (1991)	-	✓	205	
<b>MACCLESFIELD</b> AA map ref: 9, 82-5	-	-		hinec.org.uk
All Saints Brough St West	<b>CE</b>	✓		allsaintschurchmacclesfield.weebly.com



Bethel Baptist Calamine St	B	✓	M13	bethelmacclesfield.org
Broken Cross Methodist Chelford Rd	M	†	M00	brokencrosschurch.org
Calvary Christian Centre Earlsway	AOG P F80 N10	✓		calvarycentre.org.uk
Carrisbrook Chapel Carrisbrook Ave	Br	✓		gospelhall.org.uk
Christadelphian Hall 11 Pinfold St	Chr	✓		m-c-c.org.uk
Elim Chris'n Life Centre Parsonage St	P Nh05	✓		elimclemacc.org.uk
Good News Cc Snr Citizens Hall Duke St	Nd Nh82	✓		gncmacc.org
Higher Hurdsfield M Rainow Rd	M	✓		mandsmethodists.org
Holy Trinity Hurdsfield Rd	CE	†	M92/11	hthmacc.com
JCLDS Priory Rd/Victoria Rd	LDS	✓		mormon.org.uk
KHJW Western Ave	JW	✓		no website
Macclesfield Methodist Westminster Rd	M N98	✓		methodistchurchmacclesfield.org
Macclesfield URC Park Green	URC	✓	E14 M10	macclesfieldurc.fsnet.co
St Alban Chester Road	RC	✓	M08	stalbanmacc.org.uk
St Barnabus Lyme Ave & <a href="#">Worth Unlimited/Cre8</a>	CE	✓		stmichaels-macclesfield.org
St Edward the Confessor London Rd	RC	✓	E03 M13	st-edward-macclesfield.
St George's Street Baptist	B	✓	E11 M11	stgeorgesstbaptistchurch
St John Evangelist Earlsway Weston	CE	✓		stjohnsmacclesfield.org
St Luke Macclesfield Hospital Chapel	Nd	✓		eastcheshire.nhs.uk
St Michael & All Angels* Marketplace	CE	✓	E04 M08	stmichaels-macclesfield
St Paul Glegg St	CE	✓		stpaulmacclesfield.org
St Peter Windmill St	CE	✓		stpetermacc.org
St Stephen Forest Chapel	CE	✓		achurchnearyou.com
St Theodore, St Paul Parish Hall Glegg St	GkO Nh05	✓		Antiochian
Salvation Army Roe St	SA	✓		salvationarmy.org.uk
Silklife Centre George St <a href="#">foodbank</a>	P F03 Nh08	✓		silklife.co.uk
Tytherington Family Worship Sandwich Dr	Nd F79 N93	✓		tfwchurch.org
Unitarian 4 King Edward St	U	✓		maccukunitarians.co
and <a href="#">Society of Friends</a> (Quaker)	Q	✓		quaker.org.uk
Upton Priory Ch of Resurrection Churchway	CE	✓	M15	church-of-the-resurrection
<b>MALPAS</b> AA map ref: 205	-	-		malpascheshire.co.uk
High Street Methodist/URC <b>EP</b>	<b>M/URC</b> N95	✓		cheshiresouth.org.uk
<u>and Elim Community Church</u> High St	P N10	✓	205	malpaselimcc.com
St Oswald* Wrexham Rd	CE	✓	M15p	malpasschurch.co.uk
<b>Manley</b> St John the Evangelist	CE	✓		achurchnearyou.com

Marbury (Sth Cheshire) St Michael	CE	✓	E07 207	achurchnearyou.com
Marthall All Saints Sandle Bridge Lane	CE	✓	76	achurchnearyou.com
Marton St James & St Paul (1343)	CE	✓	M15 180	martonchurch.co
Meadowbank Winsford - see App C (2000)	-	✓	117	
Mickle Trafford Methodist Station Lane	M	✓	101	chesteranddelamereforest.org
MIDDLEWICH AA map ref: 122-3	-	-	-	
Middlewich Community C Brook Ln	AOG P N81/Nh05	✓		CAP middlewich.org
Middlewich Methodist Booth Ln A533	M N00	✓	#	danetrentmethodist.org
Middlewich URC Queen St	URC	✓	M10	middlewichchurch.org
St Mary New King Street	RC	✓		stmarysparishmiddlewich.org
St Michael & All Angels	CE	✓		middlewichparishchurch.org
Minshull Vernon URC Eardswick Lane	URC	✓	M15 191 #	minshullchurch.unc
Mobberley St Wilfrid Church Lane	CE	✓	70	mobberleychurch.co
Mobberley Methodist Faulkener's Lane	M	✓	70	mandsmethodists.org
Mottram St Andrew Methodist Priest Lane	M	✓	79	aeandkcircuit.com
Moore - see Appendix C (2006)	-	✓	144-5	
Morley Green - see Appendix C (2010)	-	✓	71	
Mollington Old School Grove Rd	CE	✓	159	see Backford St Oswald
Moulton St Stephen the Martyr Main Rd	CE	✓	117	ststephens-moulton.org
Moulton Methodist Chapel St	M	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit
Mount Pleasant Methodist Chapel St	M	✓	133	no website
Mow Cop Bank Methodist The Bank	M	✓	133	no website
Mow Cop Community Ch Top Station Rd	P	✓		mowcopchurch.com
Mow Cop Methodist Woodcock Lane	M	✓	#	danetrentmethodist.org
Mow Cop St Luke's Church St	CE	✓		oddrodeparish.org
Mow Cop St Thomas Church Lane	CE	✓	133	achurchnearyou.com
Mouldsworth St Cuthbert by the Forest	RC	✓	161	saintcuthbert.org.uk
NANTWICH AA map ref: 1, 127, 134-5	-	-	-	
Broad Lane Methodist Audlem Rd	M	✓	E00~	cheshiresouth.org.uk
Christadelphian Brookfield Hall Shrewbridge Rd	Chr	✓		christadelphians.org
Elim Pentecostal Regents Park London Rd	P N90	✓		nantwichelimchurch.org
KHJW 60 Hellath Wen (House Church)	JW	✓		no website
St Anne RC Pillory Street	RC	✓		stannesnantwich.org
St Mary* Town Square	CE	✓	M09	stmarysnantwich.org
Nantwich Baptist & URC EP Market St	B/URC N83	✓		foodbank marketstreetchurch.co

Nantwich Wesley M [2] Hospital St	M	N09[2]✓	nantwich-methodist-church.org
<b>Nether Alderley</b> St Mary w Birtles	CE	✓	stmaryalderley.com
<b>NESTON</b> AA map ref: 92	-	-	neston.org.uk
Little Neston Methodist Mellock Ln	M	✓	littlenestonmethodistchurch
Little Neston Salem Evangelical	Br	✓	gospelhall.org.uk
Neston Evangelical C F Burton Rd	Ind	✓	nestonchristianfellowship.org
Neston Methodist <b>Welcome Café</b> Park St	M	✓	E99 M99 nestonmethodist.org
Parkgate St Thomas School Ln [c1994-2010]	CE	✓	M10 nestonparishchurch.org
Parkgate & Neston URC Moorside Ln	URC	✓	E05 M05 parkgateandnestonurc
St Mary & St Helen High St <b>foodbank</b>	CE	✓	M07 nestonparishchurch.org
St Michael & AA Marshland Rd L Neston	CE	N91 ✓	nestonparishchurch.org
St Winefride Burton Rd Little Neston	RC	✓	M93 stwinefridesneston.org
<b>Norley</b> St John the Evangelist	CE	✓	162 nck.org.uk 153
<b>Norley</b> Methodist Maddocks Hill	M	✓	E07 M06 chesteranddelamereforest
<b>North Rode</b> St Michael Church Lane	CE	✓	180 northrodechurch.org.uk
<b>NORTHWICH</b> AA map ref: 13; 112-14	-	-	northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org**
Anderton Baptist Hough Lane	B	✓	no website
Barnton Christ Church Church Rd	CE	✓	christchurchbarnton.org
Barnton Our Lady of Fatima Hayes Dr	RC	✓	dioceseofshrewsbury.org
Barnton Methodist Lydyett Lane <b>foodbank</b>	M	✓	E02/06~ web site above **
Bethel Evang'l Hargreaves Rd <b>foodbank</b>	Nd	N90 ✓	bethelchurch.co.uk
<u>Castle M &amp; URC CC</u> <b>EP</b> Beeston St <b>M/URC</b>	N14	✓	M09 northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
Christ Church Greenbank Stn Chester Rd <b>CAP</b>	CE	N02 †	E15 M15 christchurchgreenbank
Emmanuel Evangelical Old Hall Rd Leftwich	Nd	✓	emmanuel-online.org
Holy Trinity Waterloo Rd	CE	✓	achurchnearyou.com
Kingdom Hall JW Queen Street	JW	✓	no website
Lifchurch Blackcroft Ave Barnton	AOG P	N02 ✓	154 barntonpentecostalch urch
Northwich Methodist Witton St <b>foodbank</b>	M	N90 ✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
Our Lady of Czestochowa London Rd <b>Polish</b>	PC	✓	weekdaymasses.org
Shurlach/Rudheath M Shipbrook Rd <b>foodbank</b>	M	✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit.org
St Helen Witton w St Thomas Rudheath	CE	✓	M91 sthelenwitton.org.uk
St Luke Old Library Winnington Park Park Rd	CE	✓	M13 stlukewinnington.org
St Wilfrid Witton St	RC	✓	stwilfredparish.co.uk
Salvation Army Tabley St	SA	N90 ✓	salvationarmy.org.uk
The Connection Venue Gadbrooke Rd Rudheath	P	Nh01 ✓	connection.churchinsight.com

Oakhanger St Luke Taylors Ln EP with	CE/	✓			christchurch-alsager.org
Oakhanger Methodist Butterton Ln & Youth P	M	N16	✓	E95	130 cheshiresouth.org.uk
Oakmere Methodist Abbey Ln Delamere	M		✓		oakmeremethodist.org
Odd Rode All Saints	CE		✓		oddrodeparish.org
Oscroft - see Appendix C (1992)	-		✓		175
Over Alderley - see App C (2011)	-		✓		79
Over Peover St Lawrence	CE		✓		165 overpeover.com
Over Peover Methodist Cinder Lane	M		✓	M11~	aeandkcircuit.com
Over Tabley St Paul A556	CE		†		156 achurchnearyou.com
Pickmere Methodist Pickmere Ln Northwich	M		✓		pickmereandwinchammethodistchurch
Plemstall St Peter Plemstall Lane 160	CE		✓	M01	plemstallandguildensuttonbh
Plumley Methodist Plumley Moor Rd 156	M		✓	M05	plumleymethodistchurch.org
Poole/Rease Heath M Wettenhall Rd	M		✓	E15	126 cheshiresouth.org
Pott Shrigley St Christopher Spuley Lane	CE		✓		81 potshrigleychurch.org
Pott Shrigley Green Close M Shrigley Rd	M		✓		75 mandsmethodists.org
POYNTON AA map ref: 74-5	-	-	-		poyntonweb.co.uk
Lostock CF Lostock Hall P School Mallard Cl	CF	Nh77	✓		lostockcf.org.uk
Poynton Baptist Park Lane	B		✓		pbc.org.uk
Poynton CF Hockley Centre 307 Park Ln	CF		✓		pcfpoynnton.org.uk
Poynton Methodist Park Lane	M		✓		poyntonmethodistchurch
St George CE off London Rd South	CE		✓	M12	poyntonpc.net/
St Martin Shrigley Rd Nth Higher Poynton	CE	N65	✓		poyntonpc.net/
St Paul RC Bulkeley Rd	RC		✓		stpaulspoynton.org
Prestbury St Peter	CE		✓	E15	stpeterpresbury.org
Prestbury Methodist	M	N01	✓		prestburymethodistchurch.org
Preston on the Hill, Hill Top Rd	M		✓		runcornchurches.org
Pulford St Mary the Virgin Wrexham Rd	CE		✓	M93	184 pulfordstmary.org
Rainow Holy Trinity	CE		✓	E90	83 rainow.org; fivenine.co
Ravensmoor & Baddiley M Swanley Lane	M		✓		205 cheshiresouth.org
Rode Heath Rhema Mission Chapel Ln	P		✓		194 trmchurch.org.uk
Rode Heath The Good Shepherd A533	CE		✓		132 oddrodeparish.org
Rostherne St Mary Rostherne Ln	CE		†		149 rosthernewithbollington
Rowton Methodist Moor Lane	M		✓	109	chesteranddelamereforest
and Rowton Mass Centre	RC	Nh12	✓		christleton.org.uk
Rudheath - see Appendix C (2005)	-	-	-		114 -



<b>RUNCORN</b>	AA map ref: 14, 69, 144	-	-	runcornchurches.org
All Saints Church St	CE	†	M13	allsaintsruncorn.org
Beechwood West Primary Sch Grasmere Av	EP	CE/M Nh91 ✓		schoolsnet.com
Bethesda Lapwing Gr Palace Fields	EP	CE/M/URC ✓	foodbank	hallwoodparish.org
Christ Church Chester Cl Caslefields	CE	✓	M95	HaltonParish.org.uk
Christ Ch Hall Sandy Ln Weston Point	CE	✓	M10	no website
Halton Brook Chapel Boston Ave	Ind	†	M10	runcornchurches.org
Heath Methodist Vista Rd	M	✓		theheathmethodistchurch.org
Holy Spirit Fernhurst Halton Brook	RC	✓		catholicdirectory.org
Holy Trinity Trinity St	CE	†	M04	allsaintsruncorn.org
Hope Corner Community Ch	foodbank	P AOG N94 ✓	E13 M06	CAP hopecorner.co
Hope Corner Academy 70 Clifton Rd	P	N13 ✓		hopecorner.co.uk
Kingdom 20 Parker St Old Town	Nd	N15 ✓		churchomania.com/
JCLDS Clifton Rd	LDS	✓		mormon.org.uk/
KHJW Laburnham Grove Grange	JW	N06 ✓		no website
KHJW Brookvale Ave North Brookvale	JW	N95 ✓		no website
Murdishaw (Norton Parish) The Ridgeway	EP	CE/M N79 ✓		runcornchurches.org
Our Lady Lapwing Grove Palace Fields	RC	N03 †		catholicdirectory.org
St Andrew Grangeway Grange	CE	†		standrewgrange.org
St Augustine Castlefields Av Caslefields	RC	✓		catholicdirectory.org
<u>St Bertoline &amp; St Christopher</u> Norton Hill	EP	CE/M N75 ✓		stbertschurch.org.uk
St Edward Ivy Street	RC	N56 ✓		stedwardsruncorn.yolasite.com
St John Evangelist Heath Rd Sth Weston	CE	✓		stjohnsweston.org
<u>St Mark</u> Beechwood Av Beechwood	EP	N81 CE/M/URC †	M98/14	hallwoodparish.org
St Martin De P St Martins Ln Murdishaw	RC	N75 ✓		catholicdirectory.org
St Mary Castle Rd Halton	CE	†		HaltonParish.org.uk
St Michael & All A's Greenway Rd	CE	†	E94 M15	runcornstmichaels.org
Trinity Methodist Main St Halton	M	✓		haltontrinty.webs.com
Vale Community Ch Murdishaw Ave	Nd	✓		runcornchurches.org
<u>Wicksten Drive</u> Christian Centre	EP	CE/M †		runcornchurches.org
Saighton @4 Primary School Saughton Ln	CE	Nh13 ✓		109 stpeterswaverton.org
<b>Saltersford</b> St John Jenkin Chapel Bank Ln	CE	✓		173 rainow.org
<b>SANDBACH</b>	AA map ref: 192-3	-	-	sandbachchurches.org
Elworth Methodist Station Rd	M	✓	E12 M11/12	elworthmethodistchurch
Ettiley Heath Methodist Elton Rd	EP	CE/M ✓	M13	sandbachchurches.org

Light & Life Mission Bradwell Rd	P	N12	✓	facebook.com/lightandlifesandbach
St Mary High St	CE		✓	sandbachchurch.org.uk
St Peter Elworth & Parish Hall Middlewich Rd	CE		✓	E12 Hall stpeter-elworth.org.uk
St Winefride Middlewich Rd	RC		✓	sandbachchurches.org
Sandbach Baptist P Sch Newall Av Crewe Rd	B	Nh06	✓	sandbach-baptist.org
Sandbach Baptist Green St <b>Coffee Shop</b>	B	Nh08	✓	sandbach-baptist.org
Sandbach Methodist Wesley Ave <b>foodbank</b>	M		†	E06 M12 sanbachmethodist.org
Sandbach Heath St John the Evangelist	CE		✓	M95 sandbachchurches.org
Sandbach Heath Methodist Heath Rd	M		†	M17 sandbachchurches.org
<b>Sandiway</b> St John Evangelist Church Rd	CE		✓	163 stjohnsandiway.org
<b>Sandiway</b> Methodist Weaverham Rd	M		✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
<b>Sandiway</b> Full Gospel School Lane	Nd	Nh04	✓	M05 thecrossofJesus.net
<b>Saughall</b> All Saints Church Rd	CE		✓	159 achurchnearyou.com
<b>Saughall</b> Methodist Church Rd	M	N13	✓	chesteranddelamereforest.org
<b>Scholar Green</b> All Saints Church Rd	CE		✓	195 oddrodeparish.org
<b>Scholar Green</b> Kent Green M Cinderhill Ln	M		✓	no website
<b>Shavington</b> St John Methodist Main Rd	M		✓	E? M98~ cheshiresouth.org
<b>Shavington</b> St Mark Main Rd	CE		✓	136 achurchnearyou.com
<b>Shocklach</b> St Edith Church Rd	CE		✓	199 tilstonandshocklachchurch.co
<b>Shotwick</b> St Michael & All Angels	CE		✓	M15 158 shotwick.org.uk
<b>Siddington</b> All Saints (timber)	CE		✓	166 achurchnearyou.com
<b>Smallwood</b> St John the Baptist Church Ln	CE		✓	194 smallwoodchurch.wordpress.com
<b>Snelson</b> Methodist Pepper St Chelford	M		†	M11 165 aeandkcircuit.com
<b>Somerford</b> All Saints Chapel off A54	CE		✓	179 achurchnearyou.com
<b>Sproston</b> - see Appendix C (2002)	-	-	-	178
<b>Spurstow</b> - see Appendix C (1996)	-	-	-	188
<b>Stoak</b> St Lawrence Church Lane 98	CE		✓	M13 ellesmereparish.co
<b>Styal</b> Methodist Farm Fold	M		✓	bramhallwythenshawemethodists
<b>Styal</b> Unitarian Norcliffe Chapel	U		✓	ukunitarians.org.uk/
<b>Sutton Lane Ends</b> St James nr Maccles	CE		✓	85 suttonstjames.org.uk
<b>Swettenham</b> St Peter Davenport Park Ln	CE		✓	179 stpeterswettenham.org
<b>Tarporley</b> St Helen Nantwich Rd	CE		✓	176 tarporleyparishchurch.org
<b>Tarporley</b> St Thomas Becket Nantwich Rd	RC		✓	176 tarporleycatholicchurches
<b>Tarporley</b> Baptist & Meth't <b>EP</b> High St	B/M		✓	M15-16 tarporleychapel.org
<b>Tarvin</b> St Andrew Church St	CE		✓	174 tarvinparish.com



<b>Tarvin</b> Methodist High St	M	✓	174	tarvinmethodist.org
<b>Tattenhall</b> St Alban Church Bank	CE	✓	E15 186	tattenhallchurch.co.uk
<b>Thornton Le Moors</b> - see Appendix C 2002	-	✓	99	visitchurches.org.uk
<b>Threapwood</b> St John Sarn Rd	CE	✓	205	malpasschurches.co.uk/
<b>Thurlwood</b> - see Rhode Heath	-	-	194	
<b>Tilston</b> St Mary Church Rd	CE	✓	200	tilstonandshocklachchurch.co
<b>Tilstone Fearnall</b> St Jude Nantwich Rd	CE	✓	188	stbonifacebunbury.org/tilstonef
<b>Tiverton</b> Methodist Huxley Ln	M	✓	188	bunburytivertonmethodist.org
<b>Toft</b> St John Evangelist Holmes Chapel Rd	CE	✓	157	stjohnsknutsford.org
<b>Tushingham</b> St Chad (+ Old St Chad)	CE	✓		en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Chad's
<b>Vicarscross</b> URC Oldfield Drive <b>foodbank</b>	URC	✓	105	vicarscrossurc.org.uk
<b>Walker Barn</b> Methodist Chapel	M	✓		mandsmethodists.org
<b>Warmingham</b> St Leonard Warmingham Rd	CE	✓	192	warminghamchurch.weebly.com
WARRINGTON map ref: 18, 56	-	-		- newchurch-christchurch.com/ct et al
Bethany Old Liverpool Rd <b>Charity Shop</b>	P AOG	†	E10 M12	bethanywarrington.com
and <u>OF of Nigerian Christians</u>	Nd	Nh08	†	facebook.com/OfncLiverpool
Bold St Methodist Mission <b>Coffee Shop</b>	M	†	M13	sankeyvalleymethodists
and <u>New Song Café</u>	M	N09	†	freshexpressions.org
Buckley Street Ind Methodist	IM	✓		imcgb.org.uk
Cairo Street Unitarian Chapel	U	†		ukunitarians.org.uk
Friars Green Ind Methodist <b>foodbank</b>	IM	†	M10/14	imcgb.org.uk
Friends Meeting House Academy St	Q	†	M01	quaker.org.uk
and <u>7th Day Adventist</u>	Adv	Nh13	✓	adventistchurches.org
Holy Trinity Sankey St <b>St Pastors refectory</b>	CE	†	E97	htwarrington.org.uk
and <u>Latvian Evangelical Lutheran</u>	LEL	N12	†	searchchurch.co.uk
Hope P 'Pyramid' Palmyra Sq ( <b>Active Hope</b> )	P	N97/Nh14	†	M97 hopechurchwarrington.com
KHJW Crosfield St - Sankey/Latchford/Orford	JW x3	N01	✓	no website
RCCG Pathfinder Old School Fairfield St	P	Nh10	✓	pathfindercityofpraise.co
Sacred Heart RC Liverpool Rd	RC	✓		sacredheartandalban.org
Salvation Army Academy St <b>Café Ch Shop</b>	SA	†	E13/01	salvationarmy.org.uk
St Alban RC Bewsey Street	RC	†		sacredheartandalban.org
St Benedict RC Rhodes St and	RC	✓		stmarysandstbenedictswarrington
and <u>Polish</u> Community Mass	RC	N08	✓	stmarysandstbenedictswarrington
and <u>Slovak/Czeck</u> Community Mass`	RC	N15	✓	stmarysandstbenedictswarrington
St Elphin Church Street	CE	†	M06	warringparishchurch.org

St Mary RC Smith Street	RC	†~E92	stmarysandstbenedictswarrington
Warrington Baptist Arpley St	B	†	warringtonbaptistchurch.com
Warrington CF Old School Fairfield St	CF	Nh14 ✓	no website
Working Mens Mission Thewlis St	Nd	✓	no website
Wycliffe URC Bewsey St + <u>YFC + Asian CF</u> URC	URC	†	M04/11 wycliffeurc.org/yfc.org
Appleton IM Parish Hall Dudlows Green Rd	IM	Nh90 ✓	aimchurch.org
Appleton Hill Cliffe Baptist Red Ln	B	†	E04 hillcliffe.info
Appleton St Mary Magdalene Dingleway	CE	†	E08 stsmm.com
Appleton St Monica 38 Dingleway	RC	N92 ✓	stmonicas.info
Appleton Thorn St Cross Lumb Brk Rd	CE	†	E02 146 stcross.org.uk
Bewsey St Barnabus Lovely Lane	CE	†	E05 no website
Bewsey Hope Hall Brethren Hawthorne St	Br	✓	no website
Birchwood The Transfiguration Admirals Rd	CE	†	achurchnearyou.com
Birchwood CC & <u>Café Encounter</u> Dewhurst Rd	Nd	N09 †	E10 birchwood-church.org
Birchwood Thomas Risley Glover Rd	URC	†	E01 thomasrisley.org
Burtonwood St Michael Chapel Lane	CE	✓	M13 stmichaelsburtonwood.co
Burtonwood St Paul of the Cross Mercer St	RC	✓	liverpoolcatholic.org
Burtonwood Methodist Phipps Lane	M	†	M08/96 sankeyvalleymethodists
<u>Cinammon Brow Ch of the Resurrection</u>	CE/	N89 ✓	resurrection.org.uk
and <u>St Bridget</u> EP St Bridget's Cl	RC	N89 ✓	see st-stephens-warrington
Croft Christ Church Lady Lane	CE	†	M13 christchurchcroft.magix.net
Croft St Lewis Mustard Lane	RC	✓	stlewis.co.uk
Croft Olive Branch CC Smithy Lane	P	Nh01 ✓	no website
Culcheth Newchurch Church Lane	CE	†	M92 newchurch-christchurch.net
Culcheth Methodist Ellesmere Rd	M	N65 †	E13 M98 leighandhindley.org.uk
Culcheth CF Hob Hey Lane	CF	N03 ✓	E03 culchethchristianfellowship
Culcheth CC <u>Quench Café</u> Lodge Dr <u>foodbank</u>	Pr	N04/13 †	ccculcheth.org
Elmwood Avenue URC [2]	URC	N97 †	elmwoodaveurc.com
Fearnhead Risley IM Fearnhead Ln	IM	✓	E06 imcgb.org.uk
Glazebrook Methodist Glazebrook Lane	M	†	M90 glazebrookmethodist.webplus.net
Glazebury All Saints Warrington Rd	CE	✓	allsaintsglazebury.org
Glazebury Methodist Warrington Rd	M	†	E94/07 leighandhindley.org
Grappenhall Independent M Knutsford Rd	IM	✓	M14 grappenhall-im-church
Grappenhall St Wilfred Church Ln	CE	†	stwilfreds.org.uk
Great Sankey St Mary the Virgin Park Rd	CE	†	M07/10 sites.google.com/
Great Sankey St Joseph Meeting Ln	RC	†	E04 stjosephs-warrington.org

Great Sankey Jireh Lingley Rd	Nd	N94	✓	M08/15	jirehchurchwarrington
Hollins Green St Helen Manchester Rd	CE		†	M07	rixtonwithglazebrook.net
Hood Manor Methodist Hudson Cl <a href="#">foodbank</a>	M		†	E96 M07	svmethodists.org.uk
Hood Manor World Evang'l Gospel Mission	P	Nh03/10	✓	M14	wegm.org
Latchford Baptist Loushers Lane	B		†	E08/06 M01/15	latchfordbaptistchurch
Latchford Christ Church Wash Lane	CE		✓		christchurchlatchford.co
Latchford St James the Great Manx Rd	CE		✓	M07	achurchnearyou.com
Latchford St Hilda's Mission Slater St	CE		✓	M09~	genuki.org.uk/cgi-bin
Latchford St John Wilderspool Causeway	URC		†		stjohnsurc.co.uk
Latchford John H Newman Knutsford Rd	RC	N10	†		newmanparishwarrington
Latchford Life Church Boteler H School	P	Nh12	†		lifechurchwarrington.com
Latchford LifeChurch Westy cc <a href="#">CAP</a>	P	Nh15	✓		lifechurchwarrington.com
Latchford Methodist & <a href="#">Café</a> Thelwall Ln	M		†	M03	sankeyvalleymethodists
Latchford Kent St Community Church	IM		†	E15 M09	imcgb.org.uk
Longbarn Calvary Chapel Pasture Lane	CF	Nh94	✓		calvarychapelwarrington.org
Lymm St Peter Outrington Lane	CE		†		outrington.co.uk
Lymm St Mary the Virgin Higher Ln	CE		†	M07	stmaryslymm.org
Lymm St Winefride RC Booths Hill Rd	RC		✓	E04	stwinefrideslymm.org
Lymm Baptist Higher Lane	B		†	E93 M01	lymbaptistchurch.com
Lymm Methodist Eagle Brow	M		†	M90~	lymmmethodist.org
Lymm Sion IM Evangelical Cherry Ln	IM		†	M10	imcgb.org.uk
Lymm URC Brookfield Rd <a href="#">Sanctuary Café</a>	URC		✓	E09 M11	lymmurc.org.uk
and <a href="#">Life Church Lymm</a>	P	Nh15	†		lifechurchwarrington.com
Orford Bethel Free Evan'l Cotswold Rd	Ind		✓		fiec.org.uk
Orford Community Church (Living Waters)	P	Nh01	✓		tccwarrington.org.uk
and <a href="#">Task Jesus</a> Hawthorn Centre Orange Gr	Nd	Nh08	†		taskjesus.co.uk
Orford Comm of Christ Zion Fitzherbert St	LDS		✓		communityofchrist
Orford Emmaus CF Capesthorne Rd <a href="#">foodbank</a>	CF	N94	†		emmauschurch.org.uk
Orford Hebron Hall St Steven's Rd	Br		✓		hebronchurchwarrington.com
Orford New Life P Radley CC	P	Nh95	✓		<a href="#">no website</a>
Orford Oasis P Forster Street	P	N09	†		warrington.org
Orford St Andrew Howson Rd	CE		✓	M09	standrewsorford.btik.com
and <a href="#">Forward in Faith</a>	CE	Nh07/14	✓		forwardinfaith.com
Orford St Ann Central Ave	CE	N00	✓		achurchnearyou.com
Orford St Margaret & All Hallows	CE		†		achurchnearyou.com

Orford St Stephen First Martyr	RC	✓		st-stephens-warrington
Padgate Christ Church Station Rd	CE	†	E92	padgatechristchurch.org
Padgate St Oswald Padgate Lane	RC	✓		stoswald47.tripod.com
Padgate Methodist Padgate Lane	M	†	E99 M06/15	padgate.org.uk
Penketh Kings High School Heath Rd	P	Nh03	†	kingschurchwarrington.co
Penketh St Paul Warrington Rd <a href="#">Oaks Café</a>	CE	†	E82/01	stpaulspenketh.co.uk
Penketh M & Olive Tree cc Chapel Lane	M	N11	†	sankeyvalleymethodists
Rixton Methodist Chapel Lane Rixton	M	✓	M07	sankeyvalleymethodists
and <a href="#">Bikers Church</a>	Nd	Nh10	†	bikerschurch.org.uk
Stockton Hth St Thomas London Rd <a href="#">fbank</a>	CE	†	M01/15	stsmm.com
Stockton Heath Methodist Walton Rd	M	†	M00/10	svmethodists
Stockton Heath Bethesda Evang'l	Br	†	M90~	bethesdaevangelical.org
Stockton Heath CF Walton Rd	CF	†	E90/05/14	shcf.info.org
Stretton St Matthew Stretton Rd	CE	†	M90	stmatthewsstretton.org
Thelwall All Saints Thelwall New Rd	CE	†	M15/01	allsaints.org
Walton St John the Evangelist	CE	†		stjohnshigherwalton.org
Westbrook The Ford <a href="#">EP</a> house church	<a href="#">CE/P</a>	N11	✓	kingschurchwarrington.co
Westbrook St James Canon's Rd	CE	N90	†	stjameschurch.info
<a href="#">Westbrook St Philip</a> <a href="#">EP</a> Westbrook	<a href="#">CE/M</a>	N89	†	sankeyvalleymethodists
Westbrook JCLDS Payne Close	LDS	N99	✓	mormon.org.uk/
Winwick RCCG Heritage Myddleton Lane	P	Nh09/13/15	†	M14 rccgwarrington.org
Winwick St Oswald Golborne Rd	CE	†		stoswaldwinwick.com
Woolston The Ascension Warren Ln	CE	†	E09	theascensionwoolston.org
Woolston SS Peter & Michael Wier Ln	RC	†		stpeterschurchwoolston.com
Woolston St Martin Methodist Gig Lane	M	✓	E06	sankeyvalleymethodists
and <a href="#">Kings Missional Community</a> Woolston	P	N14	✓	kingschurchwarrington.co
<a href="#">Waverton</a> St Peter Village Rd	CE	✓		stpeterswaverton.org
<a href="#">Waverton</a> Ev Fellowship Eggbridge Lane	Ind	N83~	✓	E04/16 174 wefchurch.net
<a href="#">Weaverham</a> St Mary Church St <a href="#">EP</a> Lighthouse	<a href="#">CE/</a>	✓	E00 M13	stmarysweaverham.org
and <a href="#">Weaverham Methodist</a>	<a href="#">M</a>	✓		northwichandwinsfordcircuit
<a href="#">Weaverham</a> St Bede Church Lane	RC	✓		dioceseofshrewsbury.org
<a href="#">Weaverham</a> Storehouse High Sch Lime Ave	Nd	Nh03	✓	storehousechurch.org
<a href="#">Weston</a> All Saints [nr Shavington]	CE	✓		137 achurchnearyou.com
<a href="#">Wettenhall</a> St David Long Lane	CE	✓		190 wettenhallchurch.org
<a href="#">Wheelock</a> Plymouth Brethren Crewe Rd	Br	N12	✓	<a href="#">no website</a>



Wheelock Christ Church Crewe Rd	CE	✓	E11	sandbachchurches.org
Wheelock Congregational Crewe Rd	URC	✓	193	no website
Wheelock KHJW Forge Fields	JW N10~	✓	193	no website
Wheelock Methodist Crewe Rd	M	✓		sandbachchurches.org
Wheelock Heath Baptist Hassall Rd	B	✓	193	whbc.co.uk
Whitegate St Mary Cinder Hill	CE	✓	116	#stmarywhitegate.org
Whiteley Green - see Appendix C (2004)	-	✓	-	-
WIDNES map ref: 21, 52-3, 67	-	-	-	-
Chapelfields Cc Wilsden Rd	M	✓		widnesmethodistchurches
Christian Bikers 50 Victoria Rd	Nd Nh11	✓		bike.org.uk/cma/n_chesh
Deeper Life Bechers Hough Gn Rd <a href="#">foodbank</a>	P	✓		dclm-liverpool.org
Ditton Evangelical Coronation Dr	Nd	✓		no website
Farnworth Methodist Derby Rd	M	✓		widnesmethodistchurches
KHJW Dykin Rd Crow Wood Widnes	KHJW	✓	M05	no website
St Ambrose Halton View Rd Crow Wood	CE	†	M07/13	widnesdeanery.org
St Basil RC Hough Green <a href="#">EP</a>	<a href="#">RC/</a>	N83	✓	stbasilandallsaintschurch
and <a href="#">All Saints CE</a> Hough Green Rd	<a href="#">CE</a>	N83	✓	stbasilandallsaintschurch
St Bede Appleton Rd Widnes	RC	✓		liverpoolcatholic.org
St John Greenway Rd Appleton	CE	†	E02/05 M14	stjohnswidnes.com
St John Fisher Crow Wood Moorfields Rd	RC	✓		liverpoolcatholic.org
St Luke Farnworth Pit Lane	CE	†	53	st-luke.co.uk
St Mary St Mary's Rd West Bank <a href="#">foodbank</a>	CE	†		achurchnearyou.com
St Michael St Michael's Rd Ditton	RC	✓		no website
St Michael w St Thomas & Hough Gn M <a href="#">EP CE/M</a>		†	E05	achurchnearyou.com
St Paul CE Victoria Rd <a href="#">foodbank</a>	CE	†	E01 M10	stpaulswidnes.co.uk
The Foundry Lugsdale Rd <a href="#">Lighthouse CAP</a>	P AOG N85	†	E10 M05	thefoundry.org.uk
Trinity <a href="#">EP</a> Peelhouse Lane <a href="#">foodbank</a> <a href="#">M/URC</a>	N91	†		widnesmethodistchurches
Widnes Baptist Deacon Rd	B	✓	M01/06/13	widnesbaptistchurch.co
Widnes Gospel Hall Peelhouse Lane	Br	✓		gospelhall.org/widnes
Wildboarclough St Saviour	CE	✓	86	wildboarclough.co.uk
Willaston Christ Church Neston Rd	CE	✓	93	christchurchwillaston.org
Willaston Methodist Neston Rd	M	✓	93	neston.org.uk
Willaston St Luke Coppice Rd Crewe	CE N65	✓	135	stmaryswistaston.org
Willaston St John M Wybunbury Rd	M	✓	~M14 136	cheshiresouth.org
WILMSLOW (cf Handforth) AA map ref: 71-2	-	-		wilmslow.co.uk/churches-together

Christ Ch Colshaw cc Dean Row Rd	EP	CE/M	Nh96✓	bramhallwythenshawmethodists
Dean Row Unitarian A5102/B5358	U		✓	ukunitarians.org.uk/
Life Church 'Revelation' 27 Alderley Rd	P	Nh12✓		lifechurchwilmslow.org
Quaker Meeting House Bourne St	Q		✓	quaker.org.uk/wilmslow
St Anne Nursery Lane Fulshaw	CE		✓	wilmslowparish.org
St Bartholomew Chancel Lane	foodbank	CE	†	E08 M14 wilmslowparish.org
St John Evangelist Knutsford Rd Lindow	CE		✓	saint-johns.org.uk
St Teresa & Sacred Heart Green Lane	RC		✓	stteresawilmslow.org
Wilmslow KHJW 48 Knutsford Rd B5085	JW		✓	no website
Wilmslow Methodist Kings Close	M	N86	✓	wilmslowmethodists.org
Wilmslow URC Chapel Ln/Alderley Rd	URC		✓	wilmslowurc.org.uk
Wincle St Michael & All Angels	CE		✓	183 wincle.org.uk
WINSFORD AA map ref: 120-1	-	-		winsfordchurches.org
Chester Road Methodist	Over	M	✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
Christ Church Crook Ln	Wharton	foodbank	CE	N84 ✓ CAP M93 christ-church-wharton
KHJW Siddorn St off High Street	JW		✓	no website
Over URC Swanlow Lane	URC		✓	directory.urc.org.uk
River of Life Art Centre Queens Parade	Nd	Nh98	✓	aboutmeriveroflifechurch.org
St Andrew Methodist Dingle Lane	M		✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
St Chad Swanlow Lane	Over	CE	✓	achurchnearyou.com
St John Delamere St	Over	foodbank	CE	✓ stjohnover.org.uk
St Joseph Woodford Lane	foodbank	RC	✓	stjosephswinsford.org
Salvation Army Weaver St	SA		✓	salvationarmy.org.uk
Storehouse Russell Building High St	Nd	Nh13	✓	storehousechurch.org
Trinity M & Clive Grn M Station Rd	Wharton	M	✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
Weaver Methodist Swanlow Lane	Darnhall	M	✓	northwichandwinsfordcircuit
Winterley Methodist Crewe Rd Sandbach	M		✓	193 cheshiresouth.org.uk
Worleston St Oswald	CE		✓	M99 worlestonchurch.org
Wrenbury St Margaret	CE		✓	208 wrenburychurch.org
Wybunbury St Chad Main Rd	CE	N81~	✓	136 wybunburystchad.org

**Key:** N = New Nh = New hire E = Extended M = Modernised # = site uses cookies

.. = shared building † = attended a service/social event ✓ = visited building and website

Note:: Dates of building opening <1990 are shown in smaller font to distinguish buildings which look new from those which actually were new 1990-2015. See also 'Abbreviations'

\*Architecturally, one of *England's Thousand Best Churches* according to Jenkins (2009).



## OTHER FAITHS' PLACES OF WORSHIP IN CHESHIRE 2015

## CHESTER

Amitayus C Yew Tree House Thornton Le Moors	Buddhist	-	
Chester Spiritualist Commonhall St	Sp	✓	snu.org.uk
Shahjalal Mosque & Islamic Centre Clifton Dr Blacon Muslim		✓	

## CONGLETON

Congleton Spiritualist 15 Park Rd	Sp		snu.org.uk
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## CREWE

Spiritualist 4-6 Adelaide St Crewe CHE	Sp	✓	spiritualize.net
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## HALTON

Runcorn Spiritualist 61 Ashridge St	Sp	✓	runcorn-snu.org.uk
Wat Phra Sing Temple High St Runcorn	Buddist	✓	N13
Widnes Spiritualist Lacey St	Sp	✓	widnesspiritualistchurch.co.uk
Kelsall Connect 2 Spiritualist	Sp		spiritualize.net

## MACCLESFIELD

Spiritualist Cumberland St Macclesfield	Sp	✓	snu.org.uk
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## NORTHWICH

Northwich Muslim Cultural Centre 8 Church Rd	Muslim		
Spiritualist Hadfield Rd	Sp	✓	snu.org.uk
Odiyana Buddhist Centre 163 Chester Rd	Buddist	Nh97	
meditationincheshire.org			

Rease Heath Empowered Healing 4 The Green	Sp		spiritualize.net
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## WARRINGTON

Jamiat Ul-Mulemeen Mosque [1] Arpley St	Muslim	N77	✓
Jamiat Ul-Mulemeen Mosque [2] 19-21 Arpley St	Muslim	N99	✓
Mosque and Islamic Centre, Lockton Lane, Bewsey	Muslim	N05	+
Hindu LRK Temple, Haydock St Warrington	Hindu	N93	✓
Odiyana Buddhist Centre, Orford Hub Festival Ave	Buddist	Nh97	✓
Guru Nanak Gurdwara Temple, Dover Rd Latchford	Sikh	N89	✓
Warrington Spiritualist, Academy St	Sp		✓ snu.org.uk

## RETREAT AND PRIVATE / COMMERCIAL CENTRES

David Lewis Centre (Chapel) Mill Lane Somerford	Nd		aeandkcircuit.com
Foxhill Chapel Retreat Centre Tarvin Rd Frodsham	Nd	M09	foxhillconferences.co.uk
High Legh (Retreat) Centre Northwood Ln	Nd	N98	E06 + historyimcgb.org
Little Mollington Hall Retreat Centre	Nd		morningstareurope.org

## APPENDIX B

## NEW CHURCHES IN CHESHIRE 1990-2015

1990	Alsager Community C Brattswood Drive	CHE	N	P	
1990	Appleton IM Parish Hall Dudlows Green	W	Nh	IM	
1990	Bethel Evang'I Hargreaves Rd Northwich	CHW&C	N	Nd	New building
1990	Elim P Regents Pk London Rd Nantwich	CHE	N	P	
1990	Frodsham Methodist Kingsley Rd	CHW&C	N	M	5+ M+Trinity WM merged
1990	Kingdom Hall Boundary Rd Saltney		N	JW	New building
1990	Northwich Methodist Witton St Northwich	CHW	N	M	New building
1990	Northwich Salvation Army Tabley St	CHW&W	N	SA	
1990	St James Canons Rd Westbrook	W	N	CE	New building
1991	Trinity EP Peelhouse Lane Widnes	H	N	M/URC	New building
1991	St Michael & AA CE Little Neston	CHW&C	N	CE	New building
1992	St Monica Dingleway Appleton	W	N	RC	New building
1992	Runcorn Ind Baptist Palacefields Ave	H	N	Ind	
1993	Tytherington Fam Worship Sandwich Dr	Macc	N	Nd	New building
1993	Wellspring M Canal Rd Congleton	CHE	N	M	New replaced Kinsey St
1993	Wellspring CC Loushers Ln Latchford	W	Nh	P	
1994	Christian Life Hawthorne Ave Bollington	CHE	N	P	
1994	Emmaus Evangelical Capesthorne Rd Orford	W	N	Nd	
1994	Jireh CF Lingley Rd Gt Sankey	W	N	CF	New building
1994	Longbarn Calvary Chapel Pasture Lane	W	Nh	CF	
1994	Hope Corner Church St Widnes	H	N	P	refurbishment
1995	Birchwood CC Encounter Centre Dewhurst Rd	W	Nh	Nd	relocated 2009
1995	KHJW Brookvale Ave Brookvale Runcorn	H	N	JW	New building
1995	Malpas Methodist-URC EP High St	CHW&C	N	M/URC	New building
1995	Salvation Army Whitby Rd Elles Port	CHW&C	N	SA	New building
1995	New Life Pentecostal Radley Cc Orford	W	Nh	P	
1995	Welcome Church/Café 146 Longridge Kn	CHE	N	M	refurbished
1996	Beechwood W EP B'wood Primary Runcorn	H	Nh	CE/M	
1996	Christchurch EP Colshaw cc Wilmslow	CHE	Nh	CE/M	
1997	Elmwood Avenue URC [2] Fairfield	W	N	URC	New building
1997	Hope Church Pyramid Palmyra Square	W	Nh	P	relocated 2010, 2014
1998	Macclesfield Methodist Westminster Rd	CHE	N	M	New building
1998	High Legh Centre Northwood Rd	CHE	N	Nd	reopened IM Chapel
1998	New Life CC 45 Fuller Drive Crewe	CHE	N	P	
1998	River of Life Queens Parade Winsford	CHW&C	Nh	Nd	formerly Orchard CF

1999	Hood Manor Mormon JCLDS Payne Close W	N	LDS	New building
2000	Middlewich Methodist Booth Lane CHE	N	M	repl'd St Paul Cledford
2000	St Ann [2] Central Ave Orford W	N	CE	New building
2001	LW Community Church Orange Grove W	Nh	P	
2001	Farnworth CF now New Life Cc Halebank Wid	Nh	P	refurbished building
2001	Gospel Hall Heathfield Ave Crewe CHE	N	Br	
2001	KHJW Crosfield St Whitecross W 3 churches	N	JWx3	New building
2001	Olive Branch CC Smithy Lane Croft W	Nh	P	
2001	Prestbury Methodist CHE	N	M	New building
2001	The Connection Old Fire Stn 50 Chesterway Nw	Nh	P	
2001	Vinelifa Lacey Gn Pavilion Handforth CHE	Nh	Nd	
2002	Barnton Pentecostal Blackcroft Ave Nw CHW	N	P	
2002	Christ Ch Greenbank Stn Chester Rd Nwich CHW	N	CE	refurbished building
2002	New Life Danesford cc West Rd Congleton	Nh	P	
2003	Culcheth CF Hob Hey Lane Culcheth W	N	Ind	refurbished building
2003	Hoole Baptist City Mission Chester CHW&C	Nh	B	refurbished building
2003	Kings Gt Sankey H School Barrow Hall Ln W	Nh	P	
2003	Our Lady Palace Fields Lapwing Gr Runcorn H	N	RC	New building
2003	Silklife Church Centre George St Macc CHE	Nh	P	relocated 2008
2003	Storehouse H Sch Lime Ave Weaverham CHW	Nh	Nd	
2004	World Ev Gospel Mission Hood Manor W	Nh	P	relocated 2010
2004	Culcheth CC Pr 50 Lodge Drive Culcheth W	Nh	Pr	relocated 2014
2004	Sandiway FG School Rd Sandiway CHW&C	Nh	Ind	
2005	Elim Christn Life C Parsonage St Macc CHE	Nh	P	
2005	St Theodore, St Paul P Hall Glegg St Macc CHE	Nh	GkO	
2006	KHJW Laburnham Grove Higher Runcorn H	N	JW	New building
2006	St Thomas School Lane Parkgate CHW&C	N	CE	New building
2006	Sandbach Baptist CP Sch Newall Ave CHE	Nh	B	
2007	Forward in Faith St Andrew Howson Rd W	Nh	CE	relocated 2014
2008	Christian Family Comm Centre 5 Ashes Rd CHW	Nh	Nd	
2008	Disley Methodist Buxton Rd A6 CHE	N	M	new replacment
2008	Sandbach Baptist Green St Coffee Shop CHE	Nh	B	
2008	OFNC - Bethany Old Liverpool Rd W	Nh	Nd	
2008	Task Jesus Hawthorn cc Orange Gr Orford W	Nh	Nd	
2009	New Song Café Bold St W	Nh	M	
2009	Oasis P Forster St Orford W	N	P	relocated 2012
2009	RCCG Heritage Church Crosfield St W	Nh	P	relocated 2013/15
2009	Polish Community St Benedict Rhodes St W	Nh	RC	



2009	JCLDS Newcastle Rd A54 Congleton	CHE	N	LDS	
2009	Nantwich Wesley M [2] Hospital St	CHE	N	M	New building
2010	Bikers Church Rixton M Chapel Ln Rixton W	Nh	Nd		St Augustine
2010	Blessed John H Newman Knutsford Rd W	N	RC		New b for Our Lady's & ^
2010	Calvary Chr Centre Earlsway Macclesfield	CHE	N	P	New building
2010	Christchurch Oasis Cc Ellesmere Port	CHW&C	N	P	refurbished
2010	Elim Community Ch High St Malpas	CHW&C	Nh	P	
2010	Hope Ch Ruskin Sports College Crewe	CHE	Nh	P	
2010~	KHJW Forge Fields Wheelock	CHE	N	JW	New building
2010	N Testament C of God Stewart St Crewe	CHE	N	P	
2010	RCCG Pathfinder Fairfield St Fairfield NP	W	Nh	P	refurbished
2010	RCCG Hope Centre The Georges West St Crewe	Nh		P	
2011	Christian Motorcyclists 50 Victoria Rd Widnes	Nh	Nd		Bikers
2011	Kings - Westbrook The Ford EP MC	W	Nh	CE/P	house church
2011	Latvian Evangelical Lutheran, Holy Trinity	W	Nh	LEL	
2011	Penketh Methodist/Olive B cc [2] Chapel Ln	W	N	M	New building
2011	Storehouse Costa C Main St Frodsham	CHW	Nh	Nd	
2011	The Uniting Church Garden Lane EP	CHW&C	N	M/URC	
2012	Brethren Meet'g House Crewe Rd Wheelock	CHE	N	Br	in a former chapel
2012	Freedom Chester City Missn Hunter St	CHW	Nh	P	
2012	City Church Chester Music Theatre Tarvin Rd	Nh		P	
2012	Life Church Boteler H School Latchford	W	Nh	P	relocated 2013
2012	Light & Life Missn Bradwell Rd Sandbach	CHE	N	P	in a former chapel
2012	Life Church Wilmslow		Nh	P	
2013	Adventist Friends Meet'g House Academy St	W	Nh	Adv	
2013	Hope Corner Academy 70 Clifton Rd Runcorn	N		P	New building
2013	People's Church Orford [Hub]	W	Nh	Nd	see App. 2015
2013	RCCG Station Rd Ellesmere Port	CHW&C	Nh	P	
2013	Saighton @4 Primary School Saughton Ln	CHW	Nh	CE	
2013	Saughhall Methodist Church Rd	CHW&C	N	M	New building
2013	Storehouse Russell Building High St Winsford	CHW	Nh	Nd	
2013	Vineyard 53 Crowne Plaza Trinity St	Chester	Nh	P	Chester
2013	Word of Life St John's Rd Congleton	CHE	Nh	Nd	
2014	Castle M & URC CC EP Beeston St Northwich	CHW	N	M/URC	
2014	Kings - Woolston Missional Community	W	Nh	P	sharing a M building
2014	Warrington CF The Old School Fairfield St	W	Nh	P	relocated from Quaker MH
2014	Restore 30 Oakhurst Dr Wistaston Crewe	CHE	Nh	CE	also at Costa Coffee
2014	St Francis Polish Comm'y Grosvenor St	CHE	Nh	RC	

2015 Fresh Expressions North St Crewe	CHE	N	M	New building
2015 Kingdom 20 Parker St Runcorn Old Town		Nh	Nd	house church
2015 Life Church Lymm, Brookfield Rd Lymm	W	Nh	P	
2015 Life Church West W, Old Liverpool Rd		Nh	P	
2015 Slovak/Czeck Mass St Benedict Rhodes St W		Nh	RC	

Unitary Borough Totals: W = 43, CHE = 34, CW&C = 30, H = 11  $\Sigma$ 118

of which Nh = 60 (52%): W = 27, CW&C = 15, CHE = 13, H = 3

Adv = 1; B = 3; Br = 2; CE = 8; CF = 2; EP's = 7; GkO = 1; IM = 1; Ind = 3; JW = 7;

LDS = 2; LEL = 1; M = 14; Nd = 18; P = 40; Pr = 1; RC = 6; SA = 2; URC = 1.

#### NEW 'FRESH EXPRESSIONS' OF CHURCH FOR DEPRIVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CHESHIRE 1990-2015

1988 'Youth For Christ' strives to take 'the Good News relevantly to every young person in Warrington' in high schools, churches, and communities ([www.yfc.uk](http://www.yfc.uk)).

1993 Hope Corner Community Church began supporting autistic children in four Halton schools prior to 'Gateway' in 2002 ([www.hopecorner.co.uk](http://www.hopecorner.co.uk) Aug 14).

1995 'Oakhanger Project' The Methodist Centre The Firs Butterson Lane Oakhanger Crewe, 'provides a range of outdoor & adventure activities designed to encourage and enable the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth and development of those taking part' ([www.oakhanger.org.uk](http://www.oakhanger.org.uk) 6 Apr 17).

1999 The 'Open The Book' project is delivered by teams of Christian volunteers in various towns in Cheshire (e.g. Haslington, Macclesfield, Northwich, Widnes 2009, and Warrington 2013), who act out narrated Bible stories 'in lively and informative ways' in primary school assemblies ([www.openthebook.net](http://www.openthebook.net) 9 Sep 15).

2005 'Cre8' Youth & Community Project - Worth Unlimited St Barnabus CE Lyme Avenue Macclesfield, 'Helps disadvantaged young people build hope, unlock their potential and realise their own worth' ([worthunlimited.co.uk-macclesfield](http://worthunlimited.co.uk-macclesfield) 20 Jan 15).

2007 'Active Hope' The Smile Centre Sandy Lane Orford Warrington 'is committed to giving children and young people from all circumstances and backgrounds access to fantastic outdoor and adventurous activities provided by a dedicated team of Christian Instructors and volunteers' ([www.activehope.org](http://www.activehope.org). 17 Feb 17).

## APPENDIX C

## CHURCHES 'CLOSED' IN CHESHIRE 1990-2015

BUILDINGS OR VENUES CLOSED OR VACATED			'ACTUAL' OUTCOME
1990 Christ Free Gospel Main Rd Shavington	IM		scout hut historyimcgb.org
1990 Primitive Methodist Frederick St Widnes	H PM		demolished
1991 Kinsey St M Congleton	CHE	M	Replaced by new Wellspring M
1991 Lower Wych PM Malpas	CW&C	PM	converted to residential use
1991 Oscroft IM Willington Ln	CW&C	IM	converted to residential use
1992 Cotebrook Primitive M	CW&C	PM	redundant
1992 Oughtrington M Sandy Ln Lymm	W (fire) M		Became a house church until 02
1992 Winwick Methodist Golborne Rd	W	M	converted to residential use
1993 Burwardsley PM Chapel	CW&C	PM	converted to residential use
1993 Churton Primitive M	CW&C	PM	converted to residential use
1993 Pipers Ash PM George St Chester	CW&C	PM	converted to residential use
1994 Christ Church Ellesmere Port	CW&C	CE	bought by Oasis Cc 2010
1994 Elmwood Avenue URC [1]	W	URC	Replaced by new (No. 2) 1997
1994 St John the Baptist Crewe	CHE	CE	converted for Go-Kart racing
1995 St Ann CE Winwick Rd	W	CE	Relocated to new building 2000
1995 PM Chapel South Park Rd Macclesfield	CHE	PM	converted to residential use
1995 Welsh Calvinist Crosfield St	W	WC	replaced by Hope Alive P
1996 Emmanuel Bold St	W	CE	converted to secular use
1996 High Legh IM Northwood Ln	CW&C	IM	Reopened as retreat centre 98
1996 Spurstow PM Chapel nr Bunbury	CHE	PM	converted to residential use
1997 St George St George St Macclesfield	CHE	CE	converted to offices 2004
1997 St Patrick West Bank Widnes	H	RC	demolished
1998 Chedford M Middlewich	CHE	M	Replaced by Middlewich M 2000
1998 Beech Lane PM Macclesfield	CHE	PM	converted to commercial use
1999 Allgreave M A54 Macclesfield	CHE	M	redundant
1999 Buerton IM Woore Rd Audlem	CHE	IM	(United Free Gospel)
1999 KHJW Wash Lane Latchford	W	JW	Relocated to Crosfield St 2001
2000 KHJW Lythgoe's Lane Orford	W	JW	Relocated to Crosfield St 2001
2000 Meadowbank PM Winsford	CW&C	PM	disbanded
2000 St Thomas Green Lane Ditton Widnes	H CE		demolished
2000 Trinity WM Main St Frodsham	CW&C	M	Relocated to 5 Crosses M 1990
2000 Wellspring CC Loushers Ln Latchford	W	P	Relocated beyond Cheshire
2001 Gorse Covert Baptist Birchwood	W	B	disbanded
2001 Chapel Ln Independant Moulton	CW&C	Ind	converted to residential use



2001	St Faith	Preston Brook	Halton	CE	converted to residential use	
2001	Stockton Heath	Br Evangelical	W	Br	Relocated to Bethesda Evang'l	
2001	Welsh Calvinist	Rutland St	Runcorn	H WC	disbanded	
2001	Welsh Row	PM Nantwich	CHE	PM	Relocated merged with Central M	
2002	Hatchmere	PM Blakemere Ln	CW&C	PM	converted to residential use	
2002	St Mary	Thornton Le Moors	CW&C	CE	redundant but open for visits	
2002	Sproston	M Brereton Ln	Holmes Chapel	M	converted to residential use	
2003	Culcheth	IM Hob Hey Ln	W	IM	Relocated renamed Culcheth CF	
2003	Lymm Evangelical	Mission Grove Ave	W	Nd	relocated to Village Hall briefly	
2003	All Saints	Harthill Ln	Harthill	CW&C	CE	derelict
2003	St John the Baptist	Bollington	CHE	CE	merged with St Oswald CE	
2004	Higher Disley	M Buxton Old Rd	CHE	M	converted to a nursery	
2004	Northwich	URC Chester Rd	CW&C	URC	Formed EP with Castle M	
2004	St Ambrose	Boswell Ave	W	RC	demolished for development	
2004	Whiteley Green	Sugar Ln	Bollington	CHEPM	converted to commercial use	
2005	Christadelphian	Winmarleigh St	W	Chr	demolished for development	
2005	Moore	Methodist	Runcorn Rd	H	M	converted to residential use
2005	Norris Street	M Orford	Warrington	M	redundant; demolished 2014	
2005	St Augustine	RC Latchford	W	RC	Repl'd by new JH Newman 2010	
2005	St Thomas	CE Rudheath	CW&C	M	merged with St Helen Witton	
2006	Farm of Good Shep	Ellesmere Rd	Leftwich	CW	CE	redundant
2006	St Joseph	Tilston Road	Malpas	CW&C	RC	derelict, church meets elsewhere
2006	Union	URC Bridge Ln	Frodsham	CW&C	URC	converted to offices
2007	Blakenhall	M Mill Lane off A51	CW&C	M	convd to residential use 2010	
2007	Bridgemere	WM London Rd	A51	CHE	M	convd to residential use 2010
2007	Congleton Edge	M Congleton Rd	CHE	M	disbanded	
2007	Coole Lane	M Coole	Pilate nr Nantwich	M	converted to residential < 07	
2007	Whitley	M Pilmoos Ln (b 1802)	CW&C	M	disbanded; demolished	
2008	Cornerstone Chapel	Clifton Rd	Runcorn	Br	Rebuilt as Hope Academy	
2008	Runcorn	Ind Baptist	Palacefields Ave	H	IB	disbanded
2008	Welsh Presbyterian	Ellesmere Pt	CW&C	Pr	converted to residential use	
2008	Wybunbury	W Methodist	Main St	CHE	M	tb converted to residential
2009	Holy Trinity	Kerridge	Bollington	CHE	CE	merged with St Oswald
2009	Hightown	Methodist	Crewe	CHE	M	demolished for developmen?
2009	Minshull	New Rd	Methodist	Crewe	CHE	M
2009	Penketh	M [1] Chapel Lane	W	M	Replaced by new [2] 2011	
2009	Wesley	M [1] Hospital St	Nantwich	CHE	M	Replaced by new [2] 2009
2010	Guildon Sutton	PM	CW&C	PM		

2010~	Hough PM (Shavington) Cobbs Lane	CHE	PM		museum resource centre
2010	Morley Green Chapel Wilmslow	CHE	URC		converted to business use
2010	Our Lady RC St Mary's Rd Latchford	W	RC		Repl'd by new JH Newman 2010
2010	St Johns Mission Grosvenor Ave	W	CE		converted to residential use
2010	St John Presbyterian Victoria Rd	Runc H	Pr		disbanded
2010	St Oliver Plunkett Oakwood	W	RC		disbanded & demolished
2011	Bulkeley PM Jubilee Chapel	CHE	PM		
2011	Carmen Apostolic Slater St Latchford	W	P		disbanded
2011	Over Alderley M Birtles Lane	CHE	M		converted to residential use
2011	St Paul M Russell Rd	Runcorn	H	M	demolished
2011	Sealand Road URC	Chester	CW&C	URC	Merged with Garden Lane M
2012	Bollington Methodist Wellington Rd	CHE	M		merged with Macclesfield M
2012	Gospel Hall Br, Forster St Orford	W	Br		replaced by Oasis P 2012
2012	St Plegmund RC	Tattenhall	CW&C	RC	
2012~	St Patrick Mission Talke Rd Alsager	CHE	CE		a 'Tin Tabernacle' (black)
2013	Ashton Hayes M Ashton Lane	CW&C	M		joined Oakmere M
2013	Bradwall Green WM Ward's Lane	CHE	M		
2013	Christ Church	Crewe	CHE	CE	proposed Arts Centre/Café
2013	Clive Green M Middlewich	CW&C	M		Relocated to Trinity M Winsford
2013	St Anselm RC Hawley's Lane Dallam	W	RC		demolished, unsafe wiring
2013	Shocklach WM Purser Lane	CW&C	M		converted to residential use
2014	Gospel Hall Brethren Dover Rd	W	Br		building hired by Life Ch
2014	Christadelph'n Hall Hadfield Rd	Northw	CW&C	Chr	
2014	Halebank M Hale Rd	Widnes	H	M	bought by New Life Cc
2014	Huxley Jubilee PM Chapel	CW&C	PM		churchyard still open
2014	St Mark Longshaw St Dallam	W	CE		Congreg'n joined Wycliffe URC -
2014	Wood Lanes Methodist	Poynton	CHE	M	(building now St Mark's Oasis^)
2015	North St Methodist	Crewe	CHE	M	Replaced by new building 2015
2015	People's Church Orford Jubilee Hub		Nd		disbanded
2015	Our Lady's Hough Green	Widnes	RC		Merged with new St Wilfred parish
2015	St Marie Lugsdale Road	Widnes	H	RC	Merged w St W. Now a foodbank
2015	St Pius X Birchfield Rd	Farnworth	RC		Merged with new St Wilfred parish
2015	St Raphael Archangel	Liverpool Rd	RC		Merged with new St Wilfred parish

Borough Totals: H = 15; CHE = 32; CW&C = 31; W = 27  $\Sigma$ 105 [22 not true closures]

Denomination Totals: B = 1; Br = 4; Chr = 2; CE = 16; JW = 2; M = 26; IB = 1; IM = 6; Nd = 2; P = 2; PM = 17; Pr = 2; RC = 12; URC = 5; WC = 2; WM = 5.

NB. Church buildings closed before 1990 are not included in Appendix C.